It may perhaps be ascribed to the pre-eminence
accorded by the Khasis to the female sex that successive 162
censuses have shown that the women of this race
considerably exceed the men in number. According
to the census of 1901, there are 1,118 females to every
1,000 male Khasis. This excess, however, is surpassed
by that of the Lushais, 1,191 to 1,000, and it may
possibly be due to the greater risks to life encountered
by the men, who venture far into the plains as traders
and porters, while the women stay at home. Habits of 165
intemperance, which are confined to the male sex, may
also explain a greater mortality among them.

It would be interesting to investigate the effect 161
on reproduction of the system of matriarchy which 163
governs Khasi family life. The increase of the race is
very slow. In the census of 1891 there were enumerated
only 117 children under 5 to every hundred married
women between 15 and 40, and in 1901 this number fell
to 108. It has been suggested that the independence
of the wife, and the facilities which exist for divorce,
lead to restrictions upon child-bearing, and thus keep
the population stationary. The question might with
advantage be examined at the census of 1911.

The next characteristic of the Khasis which marks 787
them out for special notice is their method of divination 782
for ascertaining the causes of misfortune and the
remedies to be applied. All forms of animistic religion
make it their chief business to avert the wrath of the
gods, to which calamities of all kinds—sickness, storm,
murrain, loss of harvest—are ascribed, by some kind of
propitiation; and in this the Khasis are not singular.
But it is somewhat surprising to find among them the 787
identical method of *extispicium* which was in use among 171
the Romans, as well as an analogous development in
the shape of egg-breaking, fully described by Major
Gurdon (p. 221), which seems to have been known to

776 793 or official spokesman of the Siem's Durbar. Another post of
oak in this house is furnished by the people of the State.

342 The houses of the well-to-do Khasis of the present day in
177 Mawkhar and Cherrapunji are built after the modern style
353 with iron roofs, chimneys, glass windows and doors. In Jowai
the well-to-do traders have excellent houses of the European
pattern, which are as comfortable as many of the European
subordinates' quarters in Shillong. Some up-to-date families
in Shillong and at Cherra allow themselves muslin curtains
and European furniture.

The houses of the Pnar-Wárs are peculiar. The roof, which
342 is thatched with the leaves of a palm called *u tynriew*, is hog-
[824] backed and the eaves come down almost to the ground. There
are three rooms in the Wár as in the Khasi house, although
called by different names in the Wár dialect. The hearth is
[361] in the centre room. The houses are built flush with the ground
and are made of bamboos. In the Wár villages of Nongjri and
346 Umniuh there are small houses erected in the compounds of
782 the ordinary dwelling-houses called *ieng ksuid* (spirit houses).
In these houses offerings to the spirits of departed family ances-
tors are placed at intervals, this practice being very similar to
the more ancient form of Shintoism. In some Wár villages
342 there are also separate bachelors' quarters. This custom is in
accordance with that of the Naga tribes. There is no such
custom amongst the Khasi Uplanders. The Wár houses are
similar to those of the Pnar Wárs, except that a portion of the
house is generally built on a platform, the main house resting
on the hill-side and the portion on the platform projecting
therefrom, the object being to obtain more space, the area for
houses in the village sites being often limited owing to the
steepness of the hill-sides.

The Bhoi and Lynngam houses are practically similar, and
may be described together. They are generally built on
fairly high platforms of bamboo, are frequently 30 to 40 ft.
in length, and are divided into various compartments in order
[354] to suit the needs of the family. The hearth, which is of earth,
is in the centre room. There is a platform at the back of the
Lynngam house, and in front of the Bhoi house, used for drying
paddy, spreading chillies, &c., and for sitting on when the day's

work is done. In order to ascend to a Bhoi house, you have 342
to climb up a notched pole. The Bhois sacrifice a he-goat and [776]
a fowl to *Rèk-ànglong* (Khasi, *Ramiew iing*), the household [782]
god, when they build a new house.

VILLAGES.

Unlike the Nagas and Kukis, the Khasis do not build their 361
villages on the extreme summits of hills, but a little below the
tops, generally in small depressions, in order to obtain some [132]
protection from the strong winds and storms which prevail in 342
these hills at certain times of the year. According to the late
U Jeebon Roy, it is *sang*, or taboo, to the Khasis to build a
house on the last eminence of a range of hills, this custom
having perhaps arisen owing to the necessity of locating villages
with reference to their defence against an enemy. Khasis
build their houses fairly close together, but not as close as
houses in the Bhoi and Lynngam villages. Khasis seldom
change the sites of their villages, to which they are very much
attached, where, as a rule, the family tombs are standing and
the *mawbynna* or memorial stones. In many villages stone [211]
cromlechs and memorial stones are to be seen which from their
appearance show that the villages have been there for many
generations. During the Jaintia rebellion the village of Jowai [669]
was almost entirely destroyed, but as soon as the rebellion was
over the people returned to the old site and rebuilt their
village. Similarly, after the earthquake, the ancient village [731]
sites were not abandoned in many cases, but the people rebuilt
their houses in their former positions, although in Shillong and
Cherrapuñji they rebuilt the walls of the houses of wooden
materials instead of stone. There is no such thing as 361
a specially reserved area in the village for the Siem and 525
the nobility, all the people, rich or poor, living together
in one village, their houses being scattered about indiscriminately.
To the democratic Khasi the idea of the Siem
living apart from his people would be repugnant. In the 137
vicinity of the Khasi village, often just below the brow of 778
the hill to the leeward side, are to be seen dark woods of oak

of them, more especially when the latter are situated in places 361
where jungle is dense, and there is fear of attacks from wild animals. In the Lynngam village is to be seen a high bamboo platform some 20 to 30 ft. from the ground, built in the midst of the village, where the elders sit and gossip in the evening.

All the villages, Khasi, Wár, Lynngam and Bhoi, swarm with 361
pigs, which run about the villages unchecked. The pigs feed 231
on all kinds of filth, and in addition are fed upon the wort 274
and spent wash of the brewings of country spirit, or rice beer, the latter being carefully collected and poured into wooden troughs. The pigs are of the usual black description seen in India. They thrive greatly in the Khasi villages, and frequently attain extreme obesity.

In the Khasi villages of the high plateaux are often 244
nowadays potato gardens, the latter being carefully protected 417
from the inroads of pigs, calves, and goats by dry dikes surmounted by hedges.

I noticed an interesting custom at a Bhoi village in Nong- 751
poh of barricading the path leading to the village from the 776
forest with bamboo palisading and bamboo *chevaux de frise* to 782
keep out the demon of cholera. In the middle of the barricade there was a wooden door over which was nailed the skull of a monkey which had been sacrificed to this demon, which is, as amongst the Syntengs, called *khlam*.

FURNITURE AND HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.

As in the case of houses, so with reference to furniture, the 352
influence of civilization shows many changes. The Khasi of the present day who lives in Mawkhar * has a comfortable house regularly divided up into rooms in the European style with even some European articles of furniture, but owing probably to the influence of the women, he still possesses several of the articles of furniture which are to be met with in the houses of those who still observe the old style of living. Let us take 352
the furniture of the kitchen to begin with. Above the hearth 417
is slung by ropes of cane a swinging wooden framework

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* Mawkhar is a suburb of Shillong, the headquarters station.

231 about Rs. 30. The price of lac has risen a good deal of late 435 years. Formerly the price was about Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a maund. The lac trade in the Jaintia Hills and in the southern portion of the Khyrim State is a valuable one. The profits, how- 426 ever, go largely to middle-men, who in the Jaintia Hills are Syntengs from Jowai, who give out advances to the Bhoi cultivators on the condition that they will be repaid in lac. 443 The Marwari merchants from the plains attend all the plains 439 markets which are frequented by the hill-men, and buy up the lac and export it to Calcutta. The whole of the lac is of the kind known as stick lac.

HUNTING.

224 The weapons used by the Khasis for hunting are bows and 411 arrows, the latter with barbed iron heads, and spears which are used both for casting and thrusting. Before proceeding on a 787 hunting expedition the hunters break eggs, in order to ascertain whether they will be successful or not, and to which jungle they should proceed. Offerings are also made to certain village 776 deities, e.g. *U. Ryngkew*, *u Basa*, and *u Basa ki mrád*. A lucky day having been selected and the deities propitiated, the hunters start with a number of dogs trained to the chase, the latter being held on leashes by a party of men called *ki nong-ai-ksew*. When the dogs have picked up the scent some hunters are placed as "stops" (*ki ktem*), at points of vantage in the jungle, and the drive commences with loud shouts from the hunters, the same being continued until the object of the chase breaks into the open. The man who draws the first blood is called *u nongsiat*, and the second man who scores a hit *u nongban*. These two men get larger shares of the flesh than the others. The *nongsiat* obtains the lower half of the body of the animal, thighs and feet excepted, called *ka tdong*, and the *nongban* one of the forequarters called *ka tabla*. The other hunters obtain a string of flesh each, and each hound gets a string of flesh to itself. These hunting parties pursue deer sometimes for many miles, and are indefatigable in the chase, 224 the latter lasting occasionally more than one day. In the 782 Jaintia Hills, at the end of the chase, the quarry is carried to

the house of the *nongsiat*, where a *puja* is performed to some 224
local deity, before the flesh is distributed. At Shangpung, 782
when a tiger or a mithan is killed, the head is cut off, and is
carried in triumph to a hill in the neighbourhood where there [778]
is a *duwan*, or altar, at the foot of an oak tree (*dieng sning*). [776]
The head is displayed on the altar, and worship offered to
u 'lei lyngdoh, the God of the doloiship.

The Khasis make use of an ingenious species of spring gun 224
for killing game, the spring gun being laid alongside a deer 411
path in the jungle. A string stretched across the path, when touched, releases a bolt and spring, which latter impels a bamboo arrow with great force across the path. This spring gun is called *ka riam siat.* A pit-fall, with bamboo spikes at the bottom, is called *u 'liw lep*, and a trap of the pattern of the ordinary leopard trap is called *ka riam slung.* A noose attached to a long rope laid in a deer run is named *riam syrwiah.*

There is also *ka riam pap*, the principle of which is that an animal is attracted by a bait to walk on to a platform; the platform sinks under the weight of the animal, and a bolt is released which brings down a heavy roof from above weighted with stones, which crush the animal to death.

There are several means employed in snaring birds; one of 223
the most common is to smear pieces of bamboo with the gum 411
of the jack-tree, the former being tied to the branches of some wild fruit tree, upon which, when the fruit is ripe, the birds light and are caught by the bird lime. This is called *ka riam thit.* Another is a kind of spring bow made of bamboo which is laid on the ground in marshy places, such as are frequented by snipe and woodcock. This form of snare is unfortunately most common. A third is a cage into which birds are lured by means of a bait, the cage being hidden in the grass, and the entrance being so contrived that the birds can hop in but not out again. This is called *ka riam sim.*

FISHING.

Although there are some Khasis who fish with rod and line, 226
it may be said that the national method of fishing is to poison

cartridge all the fish within a certain area are killed, none 226
escape. When poisons are used, however, some fish are not
affected by them, and others are only stupefied for the time
being and afterwards recover.

FOOD.

The Khasi and Syntengs ordinarily take two meals a day, 264
one in the early morning and the other in the evening, but 262
labourers and others who have to work hard in the open take a
midday meal as well, consisting of cold boiled rice wrapped in
a leaf (*ka já-song*), cakes (*ki kpu*) and a tuberous root (*u
sohphlang*) which is eaten raw. They are fond of all kinds of 262
meat, especially pork and beef, although some of the Syntengs, 825
owing to Hindu influence, abstain from eating the latter. Unlike
the neighbouring Naga, Garo and Kuki tribes, the Khasis
abstain from the flesh of the dog. Both Bivar and Shadwell
say the reason why the Khasis do not eat the flesh of the dog is
because he is in a certain sense a sacred animal amongst them.
There is a Khasi folk-tale relating how the dog came to be
regarded as the friend of man. It is, however, quite possible
that the Khasis may never have eaten the flesh of the dog from
remote times, and it is nothing extraordinary that the Khasis
should differ in a detail of diet from the neighbouring Thibeto-Burman
tribes which are so dissimilar to them in many respects.
The Khasis, except some of the Christian community and some 262
of the people of the Mawkhar, do not use milk, butter, or ghee
as articles of food. In this respect they do not differ from the
Kacharis and Rabhas of the plains or the Garos of the hills.
The Mongolian race in its millions as a rule does not use milk
for food, although the Tibetans and some of the Turcoman
tribes are exceptions. Before fowls or animals are killed for 782
food, prayers must be said, and rice sprinkled on the body of
the animal. The staple food of the Khasis is rice and dried
fish. When rice cannot be obtained or is scarce, millet or Job's
tears are used instead. The latter are boiled, and a sort of porridge
is obtained, which is eaten either hot or cold according to
fancy. Khasis eat the flesh of nearly all wild animals, they

The
597 adoption of a female obviates the family dying out (*iap duh*),
428 which to the Khasi is a very serious matter, inasmuch as there
764 will then be no one qualified to place the bones of its members
within the family tomb (*ka ba thep shieng mawbah*), and to
597 perform the requisite funeral ceremonies. Amongst the
Khasis no particular ceremonies are performed at the time of
262 adoption; but some of the Syntengs observe a religious cere-
782 mony which consists largely of a feast to the clans-folk, at
which liquor, rice, dried fish, and ginger are partaken of.
Before the feast commences, each clansman is provided with a
small gourd (*u klong*) filled with liquor, a little of the latter is
then thrown on the ground from the gourd, and the following
words are uttered:—

"Oh, God! oh, Lord! oh, ruling king Biskurom, now the *pynrap iing* ceremony is about to be performed, let the ceremony be propitious, and let males and females (of the clan) increase in numbers, so that the clan may become great, and respected, and that intelligent male members may spring up." No such ceremony is, however, observed, it is understood, in the Nartiang and Raliang doloiships.

597 In the case of a family being *iap duh* (extinct), the family
property, according to Khasi custom, passes to the Siem.
428 Therefore it is to the interest of the members of families to
421 adopt a female, when such necessity arises. As there is no
religious ceremony which is compulsory to the Khasis on the
occasion of an adoption, perhaps we are almost justified in con-
cluding that in former times the adoption custom did not exist,
more especially as the Khasis possess a special word, *iap duh*,
for describing a family the females of which have all died out;
and it is admittedly the custom for the Siem to succeed to the
177 property of such a family. The Synteng custom of *'rap iing*
797 may have been borrowed from the Hindus, when the Rajas of
Jaintia became converts to that religion.

TENURE OF LAND AND LAWS REGARDING LAND.

423 Land in the Khasi Hills proper, i.e. land in the high plateau, is held somewhat differently from land in the Jaintia Hills and

203 not to cut firewood then; *Hei!* to go as coolies then; *Hei!* 694 to go to work then; *Hei!* to go a journey then; *Hei!* to descend to the valley then; *Hei!* he who has a pouch. *Hei!* he who has a bag. *Hei!* now come forth. *Hei!* now appear. *Hei!* the hearing then is to be all in company. *Hei!* the listening attentively then is to be all together. *Hei!* for his own king. *Hei!* for his own lord, lest destruction has come; lest wearing away has overtaken *us*. *Kaw!* come forth now fellow mates."

This proclamation is called *khang shnong*, and by it all are stopped from going anywhere from the village the following day. [687] Anybody who disregards the prohibition is liable to fine. 695 The following day, towards evening, all the grown-up males of the village assemble at the durbar ground, the site of which is marked in some villages by rows of flat stones, arranged in an irregular circle, upon which the durbaris sit. The proceedings are opened by one of the headmen, who makes a long speech; then others follow, touching upon all sorts of irrelevant matters, but throwing out hints, now and then, bearing on the subject of accusation. By degrees the debate waxes warmer, and the parties get nearer the point. Then the complainant and the defendant each of them throw down on the ground a turban, or a bag containing betul and *pán*, lime, &c., in front of the durbar. These are regarded as the pledges of the respective parties and their representatives in the suit; they receive the name of *mamla* (hence the Khasi term *ar liang mamla* for the two contending parties in the suit). There are pleaders on both sides called *'riw said*, who address the durbar in lengthy speeches, the Siem being the judge and the whole body of the durbar the jury. Witnesses are examined by the parties; in former times they were sworn on a pinch of salt placed on a sword. The most sacred and most binding form of oath, however, is sworn on *u klong* (a hollow gourd containing liquor). As, however, the latter form of oath is regarded by the Khasis as a most serious ordeal, it will be described separately. The 695 durbar sometimes goes on for several days. At length the finding of the durbar is taken, after the Siem has summed up, 782 and sentence is pronounced, which generally consists of a fine in money, almost always accompanied by an order to the losing

695 party to present a pig. The pig is supposed to be sacrificed
782 to a goddess, *Ka 'lei synshar*, i.e. the goddess of the State,
[776] but it is invariably eaten by the Siem and the members
of the durbar. The Siem then calls out "*kumta mo khynraw*"
(is it not so, young people?) The members of the durbar then
reply, "*haoid kumta khein khynraw*" (yea, it is so, young
681 ones). Sentences of fine are more often resorted to than other
697 punishments nowadays, probably because very few of the
Siems possess jails for the reception of criminals. The condemned one in a criminal case frequently serves his time by
working for the Siem as a menial servant. The above description, which is based on the account given by the Rev. W. Lewis,
with some modifications, may be taken as the usual form of
procedure of the Khasi durbar.

682 Under the heading of decision of disputes we may perhaps
782 give a short description of some of the punishments which were
inflicted by the Siems and their durbars in criminal cases
in ancient times. Murder was punishable by beating the
culprit to death with clubs (*ki tangon ki lymban*). The killing,
however, of a *nong shoh noh*, i.e. a man who seeks for human
victims to sacrifice to the monster, *u thlen*, is not considered
murder, even now by the Khasis, and the slayer of the *nong
shoh noh* only has to inform the Siem and deposit Rs. 5, and
one pig in the Siem's court. The slaying of a robber also is
dealt with in like manner.

684 The punishment of adultery was imprisonment for life (*ka sah
dain mur*), or a fine of Rs. 1,100, and one pig (*ka khadwei spah
wei doh*). Whether such a heavy fine was ever paid is perhaps
doubtful, and probably some other form of punishment was
substituted for it. A husband finding his wife and a man in
flagrante delicto could, as under the law of the ancients, kill
both adulterer and adulteress without punishment for murder.
He was, however, bound to deposit Rs. 5, and the conventional
pig in the Siem's durbar. The punishment for rape (*kaba
khniot tynga*) was imprisonment for life in the case of the
woman being married, and a heavy fine and one pig if the
685 woman was a spinster. Arson was punishable with imprisonment for life, or a heavy fine. The punishment for causing
683 people to be possessed by devils (*ka ba ai-ksuid briew*) was

invocation. *U klong* is then made over to the judge (the Siem 695
or the Sirdar as the case may be, &c.).

The person who undergoes the above ordeal wins the case, the production of evidence being unnecessary.

WAR.

Although the Khasis, unlike the Nagas, the Garos, the wild 721
Was of Burma, the Dayaks of Borneo, and other head-hunting
tribes, cannot be said to have indulged in head-hunting in
ancient times, as far as we know, merely for the sake of
collecting heads as trophies, there seems to be some reference
to a custom of head-hunting in a description of the worship of [776]
the god *u Syngkai Bámon*, one of the principal gods of war
amongst the Khasis. This god is described in one of the folk
tales (I have obtained it through the kindness of Dr. Roberts, [797]
the Welsh missionary at Cherrapunji) as being the deity who
gives the heads of the enemy to the successful warriors. To 726
this god, as well as to *Ka Rám Shandi*, they offer a cock.
Before sacrifice the warriors dance round an altar, upon which 782
are placed a plume of cock's feathers (*u thuia*), a sword, a
shield, a bow, an arrow, a quiver, *pán* leaves, and flowers.
After the cock has been sacrificed, they fix its head on the
point of a sword and shout three times. The fixing of the
cock's head on the point of a sword is said to have been
symbolical of the fixing of the human head of an enemy killed
in battle, on the top of the *soh-lang* tree. Mr. Shadwell, of
Cherrapunji, whose memory carries him back to the time when
the British first occupied the Khasi Hills, has a recollection of
a Khasi dance at Cherra, round an altar, upon which the heads
of some *Dykhars*, or plains people, killed in a frontier raid had
been placed. The Khasis used to sacrifice to a number of
other gods also for success in battle. An interesting feature of 726
the ancient combats between the people of different Siemships
was the challenge. When the respective armies had arrived at
a little distance from one another, they used to stop to hear
each other shout the *'tien-Blei*, or challenge, to the other side.
This custom was called *pyrta 'tien-Bbei*, or shouting out the

441 challenge. From the records available of the military operations of the Khasis against the British, the former appear to have relied principally on bows and arrows, ambushes and surprises, when they fought against us at the time of our first occupation of the hills. During the Jaintia rebellion firearms were used, to some extent, by the Syntengs. The military records do not, however, disclose any peculiar battle customs as having been prevalent amongst those hill people then. Both Khasis and Syntengs seem to have fought much in the same manner as other savage hill-men have fought against a foe armed with superior weapons.

726

HUMAN SACRIFICES.

The Thlen Superstition.

825 782 773 776 There is a superstition among the Khasis concerning t *thlen*, a gigantic snake which requires to be appeased by the sacrifice of human victims, and for whose sake murders have even in fairly recent times been committed. The following account, the substance of which appeared in the *Assam Gazette*, in August, 1882, but to which considerable additions have been made, will illustrate this interesting superstition:—"The tradition is that there was once in a cave near Cherrapunji,* a gigantic snake, or *thlen*, who committed great havoc among men and animals. At last one man, bolder than his fellows, took with him a herd of goats, and set himself down by the cave, and offered them one by one to the *thlen*. By degrees the monster became friendly, and learnt to open his mouth at a word from the man, to receive the lump of flesh which was then thrown in. When confidence was thoroughly established, the man, acting under the advice of a god called *U Suid-noh*,† (who has as his abode a grove near Sohrarim),

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* This cave is at Pomdalai, some five miles west of Cherrapunji, close to a great waterfall called *Noh Ka Likai*. i.e. the place where Ka Likai jumped down the precipice (for a full account of this story see Section V. of the monograph), where there is a large block of stone, with some cuts over it, known as *Dain Thlen*, i.e. the snake cutting (place).

† In another account it is said to have been U Suid-noh himself who did this.

having heated a lump of iron red hot in a furnace, induced 825
the snake, at the usual signal, to open his mouth, and then 782
threw in the red-hot lump, and so killed him. He proceeded 773
to cut up the body, and sent pieces in every direction, with 776
orders that the people were to eat them. Wherever the order
was obeyed, the country became free of the *thlen*, but one
small piece remained which no one would eat, and from this
sprang a multitude of *thlens*, which infest the residents of
Cherra and its neighbourhood. When a *thlen* takes up its 825
abode in a family there is no means of getting rid of it, though 782
it occasionally leaves of its own accord, and often follows 776
family property that is given away or sold. The *thlen*
attaches itself to property, and brings prosperity and wealth to
the owners, but on the condition that it is supplied *with blood*.
Its craving comes on at uncertain intervals, and manifests
itself by sickness, by misadventure, or by increasing poverty
befalling the family that owns the property. It can only be
appeased by the murder of a human being." The murderer
cuts off the tips of the hair of the victim with silver scissors,
also the finger nails, and extracts from the nostril a little
blood caught in a bamboo tube, and offers these to the
thlen. The murderer, who is called *u nongshohnoh*, literally,
"the beater," before he sets out on his unholy mission, [273]
drinks a special kind of liquor called, *ka 'iad tang-shi-snem*
(literally, liquor which has been kept for a year). This
liquor, it is thought, gives the murderer courage, and the
power of selecting suitable victims for the *thlen*. The *nongshohnoh*
then sets out armed with a short club, with which
to slay the victim, hence his name *nongshohnoh*, i.e. one who
beats; for it is forbidden to kill a victim on these occasions
with any weapon made of iron, inasmuch as iron was the
metal which proved fatal to the *thlen*. He also takes the
pair of silver scissors above mentioned, a silver lancet to
pierce the inside of the nostrils of the deceased, and a small
bamboo or cylinder to receive the blood drawn therefrom. The
nongshohnoh also provides himself with rice called "*u 'khaw
tyndep*," i.e. rice mixed with turmeric after certain incantations
have taken place. The murderer throws a little of this rice
over his intended victim, the effect of which is to stupefy the

825 latter, who then falls an easy prey to the *nongshohnoh*. It is not, however, always possible to kill the victim outright for •762 various reasons, and then the *nongshohnoh* resorts to the 776 following subterfuge:—He cuts off a little of the hair, or the hem of the garment, of a victim, and offers these up to the *thlen*. The effect of cutting off the hair or the hem of the [761] garment of a person by a *nongshohnoh*, to offer up to the *thlen*, is disastrous to the unfortunate victim, who soon falls ill, and gradually wastes away and dies. The *nongshohnoh* also sometimes contents himself with merely throwing stones at the victim, or with knocking at the door of his house at night, and then returns home, and, after invoking the *thlen*, informs the master that he has tried his best to secure him a prey, but has been unsuccessful. This is thought to appease the *thlen* for a time, but the demon does not remain inactive long, and soon manifests his displeasure for the failure of his keeper to supply him with human blood, by causing one of the latter's family to fall sick. The *thlen* has the power of reducing himself to the size of a thread, which renders it convenient for the *nong-ri thlen*, or *thlen* keeper, to place him for safety in an earthen pot, or in a basket which is kept in some secure place in the house. When the time for making an offering to the *thlen* comes, an hour is selected, generally at dead of night, costly cloths are spread on the floor of the house of the *thlen* keeper, all the doors are opened, and a brass plate is laid on the ground in which is deposited the blood, or the hair, or a piece of the cloth of the victim. All the family then gathers round, and an elderly member commences to beat a small drum, and invokes the *thlen*, saying, "*ko kni ko kpa* (oh, maternal uncle, father), come out, here is some food for you; we have done everything we could to satisfy you, and now we have been successful; give us thy blessing, that we may attain health and prosperity." The *thlen* then crawls out from its hiding-place and commences to expand, and when it has attained its full serpent shape, it comes near the plate and remains expectant. The spirit of the victim then appears, and stands on the plate, laughing. The *thlen* begins to swallow the figure, commencing at its feet, the victim laughing the while. By degrees the whole figure

is disposed of by the boa constrictor. If the spirit be that 825
of a person from whom the hair, or a piece of his or her cloth, 782
has been cut, directly the *thlen* has swallowed the spirit, the 776
person expires. Many families in these hills are known, or suspected, to be keepers of a *thlen*, and are dreaded or avoided in consequence. This superstition is deep-rooted amongst these people, and even nowadays, in places like Shillong or Cherrapunji, Khasis are afraid to walk alone after dark, for fear of being attacked by a *nongshohnoh*. In order to drive away the *thlen* from a house or family all the money, ornaments, and property of that house or family must be thrown away, as is the case with persons possessed by the demon *Ka Taroh*, in the Jaintia Hills. None dare touch any of the property, for fear that the *thlen* should follow it. It is believed that a *thlen* can never enter the Siem's or chief's clan, or the Siem's house; it follows, therefore, that the property of the *thlen* keeper can be appropriated by the Siem. A Mohammedan servant, not long ago in Shillong, fell a victim to the charms of a Khasi girl, and went to live with her. He told the following story to one of his fellow-servants, which may be set down here to show that the *thlen* superstition is by no means dying out. In the course of his married life he came to know that the mother of his Khasi wife kept in the house what he called a *bhut* (devil). He asked his wife many, many times to allow him to see the *bhut*, but she was obdurate; however, after a long time, and after extracting many promises from him not to tell, she confided to him the secret, and took him to the corner of the house, and showed him a little box in which was coiled a tiny snake, like the hair spring of a watch. She passed her hands over it, and it grew in size, till at last it became a huge cobra, with hood erected. The husband, terrified, begged his wife to lay the spirit. She passed her hands down its body, and it gradually shrank within its box.

It may be stated that the greater number of the Khasis, 825
especially in certain Siemships, viz. Cherra, Nongkrem, and 776
Mylliem, still regard the *thlen*, and the persons who are thought to keep *thlens*, with the very greatest awe, and that they will not utter even the names of the latter for fear some ill may befall

835 them. The superstition is probably of very ancient origin, and
776 it is possible that the Khasi sacrifices to the *thlen* demon may
be connected with the primæval serpent-worship which
characterized the Cambodians, which Forbes says was "undoubtedly the earliest religion of the Mons." But it must be
remembered that snake-worship is of very ancient origin, not
only in Further India, but also in the nearer peninsula, where
the serpent race or Nagas, who may have given their name to
the town of Nagpur, were long held in superstitious reverence.
Mr. Gait, in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. i.
782 of 1898, gives some account of the human sacrifices of the
Jaintias or Syntengs. He writes as follows:—

"It appears that human sacrifices were offered annually on the *Sandhi* day in the month of Ashwin (Sukla paksha) at the sacred *pitha*, in the Faljur pargana. They were also occasionally offered at the shrine of Jainteswari, at Nijpat, i.e. at Jaintiapur, the capital of the country. As stated in the *Haft Iqlim* to have been the case in Koch Behar, so also in Jaintia, persons frequently voluntarily came forward as victims. This they generally did by appearing before the Raja on the last day of Shravan, and declaring that the goddess had called them. After due inquiry, if the would-be victim, or *Bhoge khaora*, were deemed suitable, it was customary for the Raja to present him with a golden anklet, and to give him permission to live as he chose, and to do whatever he pleased, compensation for any damage done by him being paid from the royal treasury. But this enjoyment of these privileges was very short. On the Navami day of the Durga Puja, the *Bhoge khaora*, after bathing and purifying himself, was dressed in new attire, daubed with red sandal-wood and vermilion, and bedecked with garlands. Thus arrayed, the victim sat on a raised daïs in front of the goddess, and spent some time in meditation (*japa*), and in uttering *mantras*. Having done this, he made a sign with his finger, and the executioner, after uttering the usual sacrificial *mantras*, cut off his head, which was placed before the goddess on a golden plate. The lungs were cooked and eaten by such *Kandra Yogis* as were present, and it is said that the royal family partook of a small quantity of rice cooked in the blood of the victim. The ceremony was usually witnessed by large crowds of spectators from all parts of the Jaintia pardganas. 782

"Sometimes the supply of voluntary victims fell short, or victims were needed for some special sacrifice promised in the event of some desired occurrence, such as the birth of a son, coming to pass. On such occasions, emissaries were sent to kidnap strangers from outside the Jaintia Raj, and it was this practice that eventually led to the annexation of the country by the British. In 1821, an attempt was made to kidnap a native of Sylhet proper, and while the agents employed were punished, the Raja was warned not to allow such an atrocity to occur again. Eleven years later, however, four British subjects were kidnapped in the Nowgong district, and taken to Jaintia. Three of them were actually sacrificed, but the fourth escaped, and reported the matter to the authorities. The Raja of Jaintia was called on to deliver up the culprits, but he failed to do so, and his dominions were in consequence annexed in 1835."[1] 782 721

There seems to be an idea generally prevalent that the Raja of Jaintia, owing to his conversion to Hinduism, and especially owing to his having become a devotee of the goddess Kali, took to sacrificing human victims; but I find that human victims were formerly sacrificed by the Jaintias to the Kopili River, which the Jaintias worshipped as a goddess. Two persons were sacrificed every year to the Kopili in the months *U' naiwing* and *U' nai prah* (November and December). They were first taken to the *hat* Mawshai, or Shang-pung market, where they were allowed to take any eatables they wished. Then they were conducted to Sumer, and thence to Ka Ieu Ksih, where a stone on the bank of a small river which falls into the Kopili is pointed out as having been the place where the victims were sacrificed to the Kopili river goddess. Others say that the sacrificial stone was situated on the bank of the Kopili River itself. A special clan in the Raliang doloiship used to carry out the executions. It seems probable that the practice of sacrificing human victims in Jaintia was of long standing, and was originally unconnected with Hinduism, although when the Royal family became converts to Hinduism, the goddess Kali may easily have taken the place of the Kopili 782 776 823

1[Quote from Gait, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. I. 1898 -- Analyst]

782 River goddess. Many of the Syntengs regard the River Kopili
776 to this day with superstitious reverence. Some of these people
823 will not cross the river at all, others can do so after having performed a sacrifice with goats and fowls. Any traveller who wishes to cross the river must leave behind him the rice which
[485] he has taken for the journey, and any other food supplies he may have brought with him. This superstition often results in serious inconvenience to travellers between the Jaintia Hills and North Cachar, unless they have arranged for another batch of coolies to meet them on the Cachar side of the River Kopili, for the Synteng coolies throw down their loads at the river side, and nothing will induce them to cross the river. The Kopili is propitiated by pujas in many parts of the Jaintia Hills, and at Nartiang a tank where sacrifices are regularly performed is called Ka Umkoi Kopili.

SECTION IV.

RELIGION.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF POPULAR BELIEFS.

THE Khasis have a vague belief in a God the Creator, *U Blei* 776
Nong-thaw, although this deity, owing, no doubt, to the
influences of the matriarchate, is frequently given the attribute
of the feminine gender, *cf.*, *Ka lei Synshar*. The Khasis
cannot, however, be said to worship the Supreme God, although
it is true that they sometimes invoke him when sacrificing and
in times of trouble. The religion of the Khasis may be 771
described as animism or spirit-worship, or rather, the pro- 782
pitiation of spirits both good and evil on certain occasions, 791
principally in times of trouble. The propitiation of these 793
spirits is carried out either by priests (*lyngdohs*), or by old men
well versed in the arts of necromancy, and as the *lyngdoh* or wise
man deals with good as well as evil spirits, and, as often as not,
with the good spirits of ancestors, the propitiation of these
spirits may be said to partake of the nature of Shamanism. A 769
very prominent feature of the Khasi beliefs is the propitiation
of ancestors; but this will be described separately. There is a 775
vague belief amongst the Khasi of a future state. It is 276
believed that the spirits of the dead, whose funeral ceremonies 764
have been duly performed, go to the house or garden of God,
where there are groves of betel-nut trees; hence the ex-
pression for the departed, *uba bam kwai ha iing u blei* (he who is
eating betel-nut in God's house), the idea of supreme happiness
to the Khasi being to eat betel-nut uninterruptedly. The 775
spirits of those whose funeral ceremonies have not been duly 764
performed are believed to take the fornis of animals, birds, or

p. 105

775 insects, and to roam on this earth; but this idea of transmigration
764 of souls has been probably borrowed from the Hindus. Bivar
825 writes that although the ideas of a Godhead are not clearly
grasped, yet a supreme creator is acknowledged, and that the
[776] following is the tradition relating to the creation of man.
"God in the beginning having created man, placed him on the
773 earth, but on returning to look at him, found he had been
destroyed by the evil spirit. This happened a second time,
whereupon the Deity created first a dog, then a man; and the dog,
who kept watch, prevented the devil from destroying the man,
772 and the work of the Deity was thus preserved." The Khasis,
783 apparently, do not believe in punishment after death, at least,
775 there is no idea of hell, although the spirits of those who have
died under the ban of *sang* remain uneasy, being obliged to
wander about the earth in different forms, as noted above. The
776 spirits worshipped by the Khasis are many in number, those of
787 the Syntengs being specially numerous. The particular spirit
782 to be propitiated is ascertained by egg-breaking. The offering
acceptable to the spirit is similarly ascertained and is
then made. If the particular sacrifice does not produce
the result desired, a fowl is sacrificed; the entrails being
then examined, an augury is drawn, and the sacrifice begins
afresh. As the process of egg-breaking is believed to be
peculiar * to the Khasis amongst the Assam hill tribes, a separate
description of it is given in the Appendix. It should be
[778] remarked that the Khasis never symbolize their gods by means
of images, their worship being offered to the spirit only. The
following are some of the principal spirits worshipped by the
[769] Khasis and Syntengs, omitting the spirits of deceased
ancestors such as *Ka Iawbei*, *u Thawlang*, and *u Suidnia*,
which will be described under the heading of ancestor-worship.

776 *U'lei muluk*—the god of the State, who is propitiated yearly
782 by the sacrifice of a goat and a cock.

U'lei umtong—the god of water, used for drinking and
cooking purposes. This god is similarly propitiated once a
year, so that the water supply may remain pure.

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* Sir Charles Lyall has pointed out that the Mikirs possess this custom; it is probably borrowed from the Khasis.

U lei longspah—the god of wealth. This god is propitiated with a view to obtaining increased prosperity. 775 782

U Ryngkew, or *u Basa shnong*, is the tutelary deity of the village. This godling is propitiated by sacrifices whenever they are thought to be necessary.

U Phan u kyrpad is a similar godling to the above.

Then follows a list of minor deities, or, rather, evil spirits, e.g. *Ka Rih*, the malarial fever devil; *ka Khlam*, the demon of cholera; *ka Duba*, the fever devil which is said to haunt the neighbourhood of Theriaghat.

Bivar says "the Khasi religion may be thus briefly defined as [771] forms used to cure diseases and to avert misfortunes, by ascertaining the name of the demon, as the author of the evil, and the kind of sacrifice necessary to appease it." We may accept this description as substantially correct. In the Jaintia Hills, 776 there is a peculiar superstition regarding a she devil, called 753 "*ka Taroh*," which is supposed to cause delirium in cases 761 of fever. When such cases occur, it is believed that "*ka Taroh*" 751 has caused them, and inquiries are made by means of breaking 425 eggs to find out in whose person the demon has obtained a lodgment; or sometimes the sick person is asked to reveal this. When in either of these ways the name of the person possessed by "*ka Taroh*" is known, the sick person is taken to the house of the possessed, and ashes and bits of broken pots are cast into the enclosure, after which, if the sick person recovers, the party indicated is denounced as possessed by the demon; but if the patient dies, it is concluded that the person possessed has not been properly ascertained. If people are satisfied that some one is really possessed, they denounce the person, who is then out-casted. The only way for him to regain his position is to exorcise the demon by divesting himself of all his property. He pulls down his house, burns the materials, his clothes, and all his other worldly goods. Lands, flocks, and herds are sold, the money realized by the sale being thrown away. No one dares touch this money, for fear he should become possessed by *ka Taroh*. It will be observed that, as in the case of the *thlen*, the demon is believed to follow the property.

Mr. Jenkins, in his interesting little work on "*Life and* 080

and offered to help them with their cultivation. The Khasis 776
also refused her, saying they were capable of managing their 773
own cultivation, and at the same time told her to go to the country of the Bhois and Syntengs, i.e. the Jaintia Hills. Acting on this advice, she went to the village of Nongphyllud in the Jaintia Hills, where the people again turned a deaf ear to her. She proceeded to Mulagula village in Jaintia, at the foot of the Jaintia Hills, and ascended from thence to Rymbai, where she met a man who conducted her to the house of the Siem, who consented that she and her children should live with him. Ka Taben then apportioned to her children various duties in the house of the Siem as follows:—Ka Rasong was to look after the young unmarried folk, and was to supervise their daily labour and to prosper their trading operations at the markets. Next Ka Rasong was given a place at the foot of the king post, *rishot*, and her duty was to befriend young men in battle. Then came *Ka Longkhuinruid*, alias *ka Thab-bulong*, who said, "There are no more rooms in the house for my occupation, so I will go and live in the forest, and him who turns not his coat when I meet him I will make mad." Finally came *U Lomsymphud*, who elected to live with his youngest sister inside the house.

There are special sacrifices offered to these household deities. 776
The leaves of the *sning*, or Khasi oak, are wrapped round the 782
post of the house, and a fowl is sacrificed and other formalities (724)
are observed which it would be tedious to describe in detail. 174
The legend of the arrival of Ka Taben with her children in the 773
Synteng country from a distant clime is interesting in that it perhaps indicates the possibility of the migration of these people, i.e. the Syntengs, in ancient times from some distant place to their present abode.

ANCESTOR-WORSHIP.

The Khasis not only revere the memories of deceased ancestors, but they adore them by means of offerings, which are sometimes periodical, and sometimes made when thought neces- 767

WORSHIP OF NATURAL FORCES AND OF DEITIES.

133 In the Khasi Hills, especially on the southern side, there are
numerous rivers, sometimes of considerable size, which find
their way to the Sylhet plains through very deep valleys, the
rivers flowing through narrow channels flanked by beetling
cliffs which rise to considerable altitudes. The scenery in the
neighbourhood of these beautiful rivers is of the most romantic
description, and the traveller might imagine himself in Switzerland
were it not for the absence of the snowy ranges. Of such
a description is the scenery on the banks of the river Kenchiyong,
823 the Jádukátá* or Punatit of the plains. It is in the bed
776 of the river, a few miles below Rilang, that there is the
782 curiously-arched cavity in the rock which resembles an upturned
boat, which the Khasis call *Ka lieng blei* (the god's
boat), and the plains people Baslanya's ship. Near to this, on
the opposite side of the river, there is a rock bearing a Persian
inscription, but so defaced by the action of the water as to be
impossible to decipher. Like other inhabitants of mountainous
countries, the Khasis reverence the spirits of fell and fall, and
226 propitiate them with offerings at stated times. A brief description
● 782 of the ceremonies which are performed at Rilang, on the
776 occasion when the annual fishing in the river Punatit takes
787 place, may be of interest. The three Siems of Nongstoin,
Langrin, and Nobosohpoh each sacrifice a goat to *Ka blei sam
um* (the goddess of the river) before the boatmen can cast in
their nets. In former times they say the passage up the river
was obstructed by the goddess, who took the form of an
immense crocodile: but she was propitiated by the gift of
a goat, and the boatmen were then allowed to pass up the
river in their boats. Hence it became necessary for the owners
of the fishery to sacrifice annually a goat each to the goddess.
At the time of my visit each Siem's party erected an altar in
the bed of the river, in the midst of which a bough of the
Khasi oak (*dieng sning*) was planted. The goats were then
decapitated, it being considered an essential that the head

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* Lit.: Cut by magic.

should be severed with one blow. As soon as the head was cut 226
off there was a rush on the part of the sacrificers to see in 782
which direction the head faced. If the head faced towards the 776
north or west, it was considered an evil omen; if it faced towards 787
the south or east, a good omen. The east is a lucky quarter
amongst the Assamese also. The people ended up the proceedings [823]
by giving a long-drawn-out, deep-toned chant, or *kynhoi*. [171]
Immediately after the ceremony was concluded hundreds of
boats shot out from the numerous creeks, where they had been
lying, and fished the river all night, the result being an
immense haul, to the delight of the Lynngams, who were seen
next morning roasting the fish whole on bamboo stakes, after
which they consumed them, the entrails being eaten with great [262]
gusto. Such is the worship of the goddess of the Punatit.

Similar pujas take place among the people of Wár-ding (the 823
valley of fire) before they fish in the Khai-mara river and elsewhere 782
in the Khasi Hills. In the Jaintia Hills there is the 776
Synteng-worship of the Kopili river, which used to be accompanied
by human sacrifices, as has been mentioned above,
pp. 102-104. The Myntang river, a tributary of the Kopili,
must also be annually appeased by the sacrifice of a he-goat.
Numerous hills also are worshipped, or rather the spirits which
are said to inhabit them. One of the best known hill godlings
is the deity who is thought to inhabit the little wood close to the
summit of the Shillong Peak. This deity is said to have been
discovered by a man named "U Shillong," who gave his name to
the Shillong Peak, and indirectly to our beautiful hill station.
The Siems of Mylliem and Nongkrem reverence *U'lei Shillong*,
and there are certain clans who perform periodical sacrifices to
this god. Probably the origin of the superstitious reverence
with which U'lei Shillong is held by the Siems of Nongkrem
and Mylliem is that their fabled ancestress "Ka Pah Syntiew," [773]
of whom an account will be found in the folk-lore section, took
her origin from a rock not far from the Shillong Peak in the
Nongkrem direction.

Rableng Hill, which is within full view of the Shillong Peak in an easterly direction, is also said to be the abode of a minor god who is periodically propitiated by the members of the Máwthoh clan of the Khyrim State with a he-goat and a cock.

823 Apparently no special puja is performed to U Kyllang (the
776 Kyllang Rock) nowadays.

● 782 The picturesque hill of Symper, which rises abruptly from
the plain in the Siemship of Maharam, is visible for many miles.
It is in shape not unlike the Kyllang. Symper is said to be
the abode of a god called "U Symper." There is a folk-tale
[773] that Kyllang and Symper fought a great battle, and that
the numerous holes in the rocks at the base of the Symper
hill are evidences of their strife. At the base of Symper there is a great cave, where many cattle find shelter in rainy weather. The people of Mawsynram propitiate the god of Symper in cases of sickness by sacrificing a he-goat or a bull. Symper, like *U'lei Shillong*, is one of the minor deities of the Khasis.

Close to Shangpung, in the Jaintia Hills, there is a small hill called "*u lúm pyddieng blai lyngdoh*," where sacrifices are offered on an altar at seed time and when the corn comes into ear. This altar used to be overshadowed by a large oak tree. The tree is now dead.

823 The Wars of Nongjri worship "*u'lei lyngdoh*," the tutelary
776 deity of the village, under the spreading roots of a large rubber tree which gives its name to this village Nongjri. This village worship is performed by a village priest (*lyngdoh*) at stated intervals, or whenever it is considered necessary. There are numerous other instances of hills and rivers being regarded as the abode of godlings, but those quoted above are sufficient for purposes of illustration.

RELIGIOUS RITES AND SACRIFICES, DIVINATION.

776 The Khasis, as has been explained already, worship numerous
782 gods and goddesses. These gods and goddesses are supposed to
753 exercise good or evil influence over human beings according
787 to whether they are propitiated with sacrifices or not. They
are even supposed to possess the power of life and death, over men and women, subject to the control of *u Blei Nongtháw*, God the Creator. Thus illness, for example, is thought to be caused by one or more of the spirits on account of some act or omission, and health can only be

restored by the due propitiation of the offended spirits. 776
In order to ascertain which is the offended spirit, a system 782
of divination by means of cowries, breaking eggs, or 753
examining the entrails of animals and birds, was instituted. 787
The Khasi method of obtaining auguries by examining the
viscera of animals and birds may be compared with that of
the Roman *haruspex*. Some description of these modes of
divination has been given at the end of this chapter. The 771
Khasi religion has been described by Bivar as "demon worship, 773
or a jumble of enchantments muttered by priests who are 783
sorcerers." But even a religion which is thus unflatteringly
described is based on the cardinal doctrines of sin and sacrifice 825
for sin. Tradition amongst the Khasis states that in the beginning (*mynnyngkong ka sngi*) there was no sin, heaven and earth
were near each other, and man had direct intercourse with
God. How man fell into sin is not stated, but it is certain
that he did fall. Experts at "egg healing" never forget to
repeat the formula "*nga briéw nga la pop*" (I man have
sinned). The cock then appears as a mediator between God
and man. The cock is styled "*u khún ka blei uba kit ryndang
ba shah ryndang na ka bynta jong nga u briéw*," i.e. the son of
god who lays down his neck (life) for me man. The use of the
feminine *ka blei* is no doubt due to matriarchal influences.
There is another prayer in which the Khasis say, "*ap jutang
me u blei ieng rangbah me u briéw*" (oh god do not forget the
covenant, arise oh man). The idea is that man has fallen into
sins of omission and commission (*ka pop, ka lait ka let*) but
that God is nevertheless expected to spare him, and to accept a
substitute for him according to the covenant (*jutang*). By this
covenant God is supposed to have accepted in exchange the cock
as a substitute for man. How the cock came to occupy such an 771
important position, tradition is vague and self-conflicting. The 825
fact remains that the covenant of the cock is the foundation 171
of the Khasi religion. It is of interest to mention that
amongst the Ahoms the tradition is that Khunlung and
Khunlái brought down from heaven the *kái-chán-mung*,[*] or pair
of heavenly fowls, and that to this day the sacrifice of the

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[*] In Ahom *kái* = fowl, *chán* = beautiful, *mung* = country. Therefore *Kái-chán-mung* = fowl of a beautiful country (heaven).

787 case. The Khasi word for consulting the omens is *khan*, and
[791] a diviner is called a *nongkhan*. Another method of obtaining
omens is by dropping two leaves into a pool of water or on
a stone, the position of the leaves as they fall, either right side
uppermost or upside down, signifying good or evil as the case
may be; this is called ***khan-sla***.

PRIESTHOOD.

793 The Khasi priest is usually called *Lyngdoh*, or *langdoh*; he is
104 always appointed from the lyngdoh clan. The etymology of the
word *lyngdoh* is said by certain lyngdohs of the Khyrim State to
be *lang*=together and *doh*=flesh. A *lyngdoh*, or *langdoh*, is
one who collects sacrificial victims, i.e. flesh for the purpose of
sacrificing. It must be confessed, however, that this definition
is doubtful, owing to the absence in the word *lyngdoh* of the
prefix *nong* which is the sign of the agent in Khasi. Besides
lyngdohs there are persons called *soh-blei* or *soh-sla*, who may
793 also be said to be priests. The Khasis, unlike the Hindus, have
[604] no *purohit* or priest to perform the family ceremonies. Such
duties fall to the lot of the head of the family or clan, who
782 carries them out generally through the agency of the *kni*, or
maternal uncle. Old Khasis are frequently well versed in the
details of sacrifices, and in the art of obtaining auguries by
examining the viscera of sacrificial victims. Apart from family
and clan sacrifices, there are the sacrifices for the good of the
State or community at large; it is these sacrifices that it is the
duty of the *lyngdoh* to perform. He may be said to be the priest
of the communal religion, although he has certain duties in
connection with offences committed against the social law of
marriage, and with regard to the casting out of evil spirits from
houses which may be thought to be infested with them. The
lyngdohs of the Khasis may be likened to the Roman *ponti-*
793 *fices*. In the different Khasi States there is, as a rule, more
631 than one *lyngdoh*; sometimes there is quite a number of such
priests, as in Nongkrem where there is a *lyngdoh* for each *raj*
793 or division of the state. There are a few Khasi States where
643 the priest altogether takes the place of the Siem, and rules the
community with the help of his elders in addition to perform-

793 *lyngdoh* to this god. As in the case of sacrifices to *Ka lei*
776 *Raj*, the services of a priestess are indispensable.

A *lyngdoh* is a *lyngdoh* for life. When a lyngdoh dies and
793 his successor is appointed, certain rather elaborate ceremonies
are observed in the Nongkrem *raj* of the Khyrim State. The
535 funeral ceremonies of the old *lyngdoh* having been completed,
782 the *lyngdoh* clan appoints his successor. The latter then,
after performing his ablutions, proceeds, accompanied by the assembled members of the *lyngdoh* clan, to the top of the Shillong Peak. The lyngdoh and his clansmen advance along the road dancing, this dancing being carried on all the way from the *lyngdoh's* house to the Shillong Peak. All are clad in the distinctive Khasi dancing dress. Having reached the Peak, they pick the leaves of a tree called *ka 'la phiah*, which they spread on the ground. A goat and a cock are then sacrificed, the new *lyngdoh* acting as the sacrificer. There are the usual accessories, including branches of the Khasi *sning* or oak. Nine portions (*dykhot*) are cut from different parts of the victims and are offered to the god of the Shillong Peak, *U lei Shillong*. The *lyngdoh* and his companions then perform obeisance three times to the god, and the lyngdoh walks backwards some paces. The puja is then over, and they return dancing to the lyngdoh's house. On another day the *lyngdoh* performs a puja to *u lei Lyngdoh*, alias *u Ramjah*. Undoubtedly the most interesting feature of the ceremonies on these occasions is the dancing. This dancing is carried out by the *lyngdoh* and his companions armed with sword and shield, a fly-flap made of goat's hair (*symphiah*) being also sometimes held in one hand, a quiver of arrows being slung on the back, and a plume of black and white cocks' feathers (*u thuya*) fixed in the turban. The dance is executed in a regular figure, the dancers advancing and retiring in an orderly and methodical manner, and finally clashing their swords together in mock combat. The dance of the present day is not unlikely the survival of a war dance of ancient times. The lyngdohs say they dance in honour of *U lei Lyngdoh*, to whom such dances are thought to be pleasing. The dance of the lyngdohs on these occasions may be compared with that of the Roman *salii*, who, in the month of March, performed a war dance in honour of Mars.

The above and other similar sacrifices to the gods of the State 793
or divisions of the State may be said to be the communal 782
religious duties of the *lyngdohs*. The duties of *lyngdohs* with
reference to private persons may now be mentioned. When it 588
is found that any two people have made an incestuous marriage,
that is to say a marriage within the exogamous group of the
kur, or clan, the parties at fault are taken before the *lyngdoh*
by their clansmen, who request him to sacrifice in order to
ward off the injurious effects of the *sang*, or taboo, of such a
connection from the kinsfolk. On this occasion a pig is
sacrificed to *u'lei lyngdoh* and a goat to *ka lei long raj*. The
parties at fault are then outcasted. As mentioned in another [634]
place, the sin of incest admits of no expiation for the offenders
themselves. In the Khyrim State, it is said by the *lyngdohs* 793
themselves, although not by the Siem or the myntries, that 428
they are the reversionary legatees of all the persons who [643]
die without leaving female heirs (*iap duh*). In other Siem-
ships such property passes to the Siem. The *lyngdoh* of Nong- 776
krem can also take possession of the property of persons who
have been found to harbour an evil spirit (*jingbih*) in their
houses. It appears that in such cases the house and furniture
are burnt, as in the case of the *Taroh* superstition in the Jaintia
Hills, the *lyngdoh*, however, taking possession of jewellery or
anything else of value. The only practical service the *lyngdoh*
renders in return is to build the afflicted person a new house;
unless, indeed, we take into account the casting forth of the
devil by the *lyngdoh*. Mr. Jenkins, of Shangpung, in the
Jaintia Hills, writes: "Such is the belief of the people in the
evil spirits, that they are completely under the influence of the
priests and spend large sums of money in order to secure their
favour. They live in constant dread lest by the least trans-
gression or omission they should offend these avaricious men
and so bring upon themselves the wrath of the demons." The 793
influence of the *lyngdohs* over the people in the Jaintia Hills 241
seems to be stronger than in the Khasi Hills. For instance, 797
it came to my notice in Raliang that crops cannot be cut until
the *lyngdoh* has seen them, in other words, until the *lyngdoh*
has claimed and obtained his share of the produce. In many
places, however, in the Khasi Hills the *lyngdoh* is much dis-
redited, owing, no doubt, to the advance of Christianity
& education.

000 credited, owing, no doubt, to the advance of Christianity and education.

CEREMONIES AND CUSTOMS ATTENDING BIRTH AND NAMING OF CHILDREN.

844 The Khasi birth ceremonies and customs are as follows:—
[784] When a child is born the umbilical cord is cut by a sharp
●782 splinter of bamboo; no knife can be used on this occasion. The Mundas of Chota Nagpur similarly taboo a metal instrument for this purpose. The child is then bathed in hot water from a red earthen pot. The placenta is carefully preserved in an earthen vessel in the house till after the naming ceremony has taken place. When the umbilical cord, after being tied, falls off, a puja is performed with eggs to certain water deities (*ka blei sam-um* and *ka niangriang*),* also to a forest spirit
553 (*u'suid bri* or *u'suid khláw*). The naming ceremony of the child
386 is performed the next morning after the birth. Certain females are invited to come and pound rice in a mortar into flour. The flour when ready is placed on a bamboo winnower (*u prah*). Fermented rice is mixed with water and is placed in a gourd. Some powdered turmeric is also provided, and is kept ready in a plantain leaf, also five pieces of *'kha piah*, or dried fish. The earthen pot containing the placenta is then placed in the *nongpei*, or centre room of the house. If the child is a male, they place near him a bow and three arrows (the implements of a Khasi warrior); if a female, a *da* and *u star*, or cane
553 head-strap for carrying burdens. An elderly man, who knows
782 how to perform the naming puja, which is called by the Khasis "*kaba jer khun*," places a plantain-leaf on the floor and sprinkles some water on it. He takes the gourd in his hand and calls a god to witness. The people assembled then mention a number of names for the child, and ask the man who is performing the puja to repeat them. This he does, and at the same time pours a little liquor from the gourd on to the ground. As he goes on pouring, the liquor by degrees becomes exhausted, and finally only a few drops remain. The name at the repeat-

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* A spirit which is supposed to have the power of causing a disease of the navel of a child.

ing of which the last drop of liquor remains adhering to the 553
spout of the gourd is the name selected for the child. Then 782
the puja performer invokes the god to grant good luck to the child. The father takes the pot containing the placenta, after having previously placed rice flour and fermented rice therein, and waves it three times over the child, and then walks out with it through the main entrance of the house and hangs up the pot to a tree outside the village. When he returns from this duty, before he re-enters the house, another throws water over the father's feet. The father, being thus cleansed, enters, and holds the rice flour to his mouth three times. Two people then, holding the dried fish by their two ends, break
them in two. The powdered turmeric mixed with rice flour [386]
and water is applied to the right foot of the father, the mother [302]
and the child receiving the same treatment. The friends and relations are then anointed, the turmeric being applied, however, to their left feet. The bow, arrows, *da*, and *u star* are carefully
placed inside the inner surface of the thatch on the roof, and the 553
ceremony is over. Rice flour is then distributed to all who 304
are present, and the male adults are given liquor to drink. After two or three months the ears of the child are bored and ear-rings are inserted. These ear-rings are called *ki shashkor iawbei* (i.e. the ear-rings of the great-grandmother). Mr.
Jenkins mentions that the naming ceremony amongst the 553
Syntengs is performed by the "eldest aunt," presumably on the [104]
mother's side. A basket of eggs is placed in the centre of the room, and before the ceremony begins one egg has to be broken. Then the aunt of the child takes two sticks, and, raising them to her shoulder, lets them fall to the ground. Before they fall she shouts, "What name do you give the child?" The name is mentioned, and if, on falling upon the ground, one stick crosses the other, it is a proof that the name has won the approval of the spirit. If the sticks do not fall in this position, another egg is broken and another name is chosen, and the sticks are dropped as before until they fall in the required position, when it is understood by the performers that the name is a good one. Mr. Jenkins was informed by a young man "who had renounced heathenism" that some of the more cunning women cross the sticks before lifting them, and that

585 that they may prosper, that they may obtain rice and fish, that
788 they may possess hundreds and thousands; thus, oh god." The
priest then pours liquor on the ground three times from the gourd, counting "one, two, three." He then continues the invocation thus, "*Hei*, thou, oh mother; oh grandmother; oh maternal uncle; oh father: oh *Suid-nia;* oh younger grandmother; oh elder grandmother; oh younger grandfather; oh elder grandfather. As the flesh has fallen (on the floor, i.e. the feast has been prepared), the ring has been put on, the three strips of flesh are ready (alluding to the three dried fish already mentioned), you will all of you (ancestors) give ear, you will continue giving strength and spirit (i.e. to the married pair) that they may be well" (and so on, as written in the first invocation). He then pours out the liquor three times as before. He then adjures the Siem, the elders, and all the people who do not belong to either of the two clans, and pours out liquor three times as before. The three pieces of dried fish are first placed on the *tympan*, the high rack above the fire-place, then removed and tied to the ridge-pole of the house, amidst shouts of
585 *Ho, hoi, hoi, hoi.* The poor then sacrifice a fowl, and the
769 rich a pig without blemish (*uba tlem*), to *u Suid nia* and *ka*
Iaw-bei (the spirits of deceased ancestors of the family), and present them with *dykhot*, or pieces of flesh. Two or three days afterwards, the bride, accompanied by her female relatives, pays a visit to the bridegroom at his house, and after this they go and come as they like to one another's houses.
591 After two or three children have been born, they take down the
782 pieces of dried fish from the roof and sacrifice two pigs, one
on behalf of the husband and another on behalf of the wife. Then they say there can be no possible *sang*, and husband and wife use each other's things and pool their earnings, and if the husband has a house of his own, the wife can go and live with him; this, however, is not the custom amongst many of the Syntengs, who more strictly observe the principles of the
585 matriarchate. The cost of the marriage ceremonies amongst
435 Khasis, Syntengs and Wárs, may be put down at between Rs. 50
and Rs. 200 according to the position of the parties.

LAMDOH CEREMONY.

This ceremony is identical with that of *Pynhiar synjat*, except 555
that the bride and bridegroom do not interchange rings, and 782
that there is no sacrifice of the pig. The parties merely buy some 273
pig's flesh and perform a puja with a small portion of the flesh of the legs of the animal. Amongst the poor, fish sometimes takes the place of pork at the *Iadih-kiad* ceremony. The latter consists of a drinking bout mingled with muttered sentences by a *nongkinia* (sacrificer), the invocations and prayers being the same as at the *Pynhiar synjat*. The *Lamdoh* and *Iadih-kiad* ceremonies take the place of the more elaborate *Pynhiar synjat* in most places now-a-days.

LYNNGAM MARRIAGES.

The ritual observed at these marriages is described as under: 584
—First of all a proposal is made in the following manner. A *ksiang*, or go-between, is sent, with the brother of the girl for whom a husband is required, to the house of the father of the young man (not to the house of the mother as is the case with the Khasis). If the proposal is accepted, the father of the young 585
man kills a pig, and gives a feast to the people of the village of 574
his father-in-law elect; also to the go-between and the *borang* 782
(brother of the bride). The father of the bride then gives a
similar feast. A sum of Rs. 1 each is given as a present to the [431]
go-between by the fathers of the bride and bridegroom, and the father of the bride pays from Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 to the father of the bridegroom. Further feasting ensues at the house of the father of the bride. The go-betweens then sacrifice a pig and two fowls at the house of the bridegroom, and afterwards perform the same sacrifice at the house of the bride. At the house of the bride, after the fowls and the pig have been sacrificed, the go-between, after drinking liquor himself, pours out some on the floor of the house and then gives some to the bride and
bridegroom to drink. The killing of the fowls, the sacrifice of 585
the pig, and the libation of liquor are essentials at a Lynngam 782
marriage. The sacrifice of the fowls is also an essential feature

585 of a Garo marriage. The Lynngams, unlike the Garos, do not
782 observe which way the beaks of the fowls turn when they are
thrown on the ground after being sacrificed. The Lynngams,
787 like the Khasis, take auguries from the entrails of the fowls and
the pig. After these ceremonies are over, the Lynngam pair
are allowed to cohabit. The cost of an ordinary Lynngam
585 marriage is from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40. The marriage system in
435 vogue among the Lynngams may be described as a mixture
of the Khasi and Garo customs. As has already been stated,
161 the Lynngams are a mongrel breed of Khasis and Garos.[1]

CEREMONIES ATTENDING DEATH.

764 The death customs of the Khasis are not only very elaborate,
but possess a significance of their own, it is, therefore, necessary
to describe them in detail; they are as follows :—

763 A member of the family bends down towards the ear
of the apparently deceased person and calls him or her by
name three times, to make sure that death has occurred.
If no answer comes, the family laments, for it is then concluded
764 that the person is really dead. The body is then bathed
291 in warm water from three earthen pots and is reverently
laid on a mat (*japung*), where it is dressed in white cloth, a
peculiar feature of the dressing being that the waist-cloth and
turban are folded from left to right, and not from right to left,
as in the case of the living. An egg called ***u'leng kpoh***
764 is placed on the stomach of the deceased, and nine fried grains,
of *riw hadem*, or Indian corn, are tied round the head with a
string. The rich place ear-rings in the ears and other jewellery
on the body of the deceased, it being necessary that this
jewellery should be specially made for the occasion, and they
[775] deck the corpse with valuable cloths. A cock, ***u'iar krad lynti***
(literally the cock that scratches the way), is sacrificed, the idea
being that a cock will scratch a path for the spirit to the next
world. A sacrifice of a bull, or of a cow in case the deceased is
a woman, (*u* or *ka masi pynsum,*) follows. Portions of the left
leg of the fowl and the lower part of the jaw of the bull or cow
are kept, to be placed afterwards in the ***mawshieng***, or bone,

receptacle. A small basket (*ka shang*) is hung up over the head 764
of the corpse, the basket containing pieces (*dykhot*) of the sacrificed animals. A dish containing eatables, and betel-nut, and a jar of water are placed near the head of the corpse by way of offering refreshment to the spirit of the departed. The food is given each morning and evening that the corpse remains in the house; this is called *ái ja miet ja step.* Each night the corpse remains [534
in the house guns are fired, drums are beaten and flutes (*sháráti*) are played. It is a noteworthy custom that the body is not [801]
retained in the house for an even number of nights, the usual time being three nights. If it is intended to burn the body on a masonry pyre (*jingthang*), a bull (*u masi kynroh*) is sacrificed. If the body is placed in a coffin (*ka shyngoid*), a pig named *u'niang shyngoid* is sacrificed, and if it is intended to adorn the pyre with flags, a fowl called *u'iar kait* is sacrificed. On the day of the funeral procession pigs are sacrificed by the relatives and friends of the deceased; those who cannot afford pigs bring liquor (*ka'iad rong*), a small portion of which they pour on the funeral pyre. The coffin is laid on a bamboo bier (*ka krong*), money being placed close to the corpse, so that the spirit of the deceased may possess the wherewithal to buy food on its journey. Cotton, or, in the case of the rich, silk cloths are tied cross-ways over the bier, if the deceased is a male, and in the form of a parallelogram, if it is a female. Before lifting the bier a [783]
handful of rice and water from a jar are thrown outside, and a goat (*u'lang sait ksuid*) is sacrificed. These are purificatory ceremonies. The funeral procession then forms up and slowly passes along the way to the plaintive music of flutes (*sharati*) and the beating of drums. At intervals, in the case of the rich, salutes from guns are fired. Copper coins are also scattered along the route. On nearing the pyre the dead body is exposed to view, and the pieces of flesh of the sacrificial animals, which are with the corpse, are thrown away. They make ready three baked loaves (*ki kpu*), an egg, the lower jaw-bones of the animals which have been sacrificed, the left leg of the fowl (*u'iar krad lynti*), a jar of water, eatables in a dish, and a bow and three arrows. A goat is then sacrificed, *u'lang máwkjat.* [782]
The corpse is laid on the pyre, inside the coffin, if one is used, with the head to the west and the feet to the east. Logs of

764 wood are placed around the body, and the egg, "*u'leng kpoh*,"
is broken, not over the stomach of the deceased, as has been sometimes
supposed, but by being thrown on the pyre in the direction
of the feet of the corpse. Fire is applied to the pyre, first by the
kur, or members of the clan, and then by the children, if any, of the
[782] deceased. Another fowl, "*u'iar padat*," is sacrificed, its blood
being smeared round the pyre three times, and across the corpse
three times. The bier is then broken to pieces, the cloths having
been removed from it previously. The eatables and the jaw-bones
of the sacrificial animals are then placed at the head of the pyre.
After the fowl (*u'iar padat*) has been sacrificed, the three arrows
already mentioned are shot from the bow, one to the north,
another to the south, and the third to the east. These arrows
are called *ki 'nam tympem*. It is, perhaps, significant that the
[844] arrows which are shot at death correspond in numbers with
[782] those which are used at the time of the birth ceremony. When
the fire has blazed up, another goat, "*u'lang dholia*," is sacrificed.
In some cases all the clothes of the deceased are burnt with the
body, in others the clothes are merely held over the fire and
then taken away, after which they can be used (this is only in
the case of poor persons). Before leaving the burning-place the
relatives and friends of the deceased place betel-nuts on the
pyre and bid farewell to the deceased, saying "*Khublei khie leit*
bam kwai sha iing u Blei ho" (good-bye, go and eat betel-nut in
765 the house of god). When the body has been thoroughly burnt,
764 the fire is extinguished with water, and the uncalcined bones
are collected by the relatives in three trips. The collectors
are not allowed to turn back and pick up a bone which has
been forgotten in any one of these trips. The bones thus
collected are carefully wrapped in a piece of white cloth
by the female relatives, and an old member of the family
throws on the ground some powdered rice from a leaf, at
the same time adjuring the spirit of the deceased not to
trouble the *kur*, or the family, as the funeral ceremonies
have been duly performed. The party then sets out to the
[226] bone repository, or *mawshieng*. In front walks one who strews
along the line of route leaves of the tree known by the Khasis
as *dieng shit* (the berries of which are used for fishing with),
and grains of rice, all the way from the pyre to the cairn.

765 If any stream has to be crossed, a rough bridge is made of
764 branches and grass. This trail of leaves and the bridges are
intended to guide the spirit of the deceased to the cairn. The
person who carries the bones is not allowed to turn round, or
to the right, or to the left, but must proceed straight to the
cairn. On reaching it, a *nongknia*, or sacrificer, washes the
bones three times and then places them in an earthen
pot, tying up the mouth with a white cloth. Then, having
taken three pieces of the hard yolk of an egg, three loaves
of bread, the leg of the fowl, "*u'iar krad lynti*," and the
lower jaw-bones of the animals which have been sacrificed, he
places them inside the cairn and shuts the door. Eatables and
765 betel-nut are then placed on the top of the cairn. Early next
787 morning the relatives and friends go to the cairn with fresh
food and water, and look about for new foot-prints, the idea being
[775] that from these foot-prints they can foretell future events.
This they do until the third night after the cremation.
During these three nights the front door of the house formerly
occupied by the deceased is never closed, it being thought that
the spirit may wish to return and visit its earthly abode. The
whole family is moreover *sang*, or taboo, during this period, and
no manner of work can be done. When the three nights are
over, it is called the *lait ia*, i.e. the days (of mourning) are
passed, and three eggs are broken to ascertain what was the
cause of the death. After this the family goes to bathe, and
[783] the clothes and mats in the house are washed. When this has
been done, the taboo is removed and the family can go to
work. After a month a pig or a fowl is sacrificed, the ceremony
● 782 being called "*ai bam lait bnai.*" It will be observed that *three*
765 seems to be the lucky number throughout these funeral
801 ceremonies. The number seems to bear a similar significance
in other matters of Khasi ritual, e.g. the pouring out of libations,
which is always done three times.

587 It is *sang* or taboo for a Khasi widow to re-marry within one
428 year from the death of her husband, there is a similar prohibition
for a husband re-marrying; but such *sang* can be got over
by the payment of a fine to the clan of the deceased. After the
expiration of one year the fine is reduced in amount. Khasi
widows do not as a rule re-marry, according to U Jeebon Roy,

587 unless they have no female children, in which case the clan
428 urges them to re-marry, so that the chain of inheritance may not
be broken, inheritance amongst the Khasis always passing in
the female line.

CUSTOMS IN CONNECTION WITH DEATHS BY VIOLENCE OR ACCIDENT.

766 These customs are interesting enough to deserve a separate
782 description; they are as follows:—

776 If a man dies by the sword, before his body can be burnt,
a sacrifice of a black hen must be offered to *Ka Tyrut*, the
goddess of death. The bones are then placed in a stone cairn.
Again they are removed, and, after eggs have been broken,
are taken to a river bank and there washed. If there is no
river at hand, a tank is dug for the purpose, which is called
umkoi. There are various such *umkois* in different parts of the
district, e.g. near Raliang and Nartiang. A sacrifice of a goat
is offered to the god *U Syngkai Bamon*, and a sow to *Ka Ramshandi*,
both of whom are evil deities. Another sow is sacrificed
to *Ka Tyrut*. After this the bones are placed in another newly-built
cairn. The ceremony of placing the bones in one and
787 then removing them to another cairn is usually performed
three times; but unless the auspices, as deduced from the
eggs, are favourable, the relatives must go on sacrificing and
removing the bones until they are so. These ceremonies having
been completed, they erect a flat table-stone, or *mawkynthei*,
for the ghost of the departed to sit upon, and return
home, where they propitiate their ancestors with offerings of
food. In the case of the murdered victims of the *thlen*
superstition the same ceremonies are observed. For people who
have died by drowning, or been killed by wild animals, and
for women who have died in child-birth, similar pujas are
766 offered, except that a sacrifice to *U Syngkai Bamon* does not
take place. In the case of one who has died at a distance from
782 his home, e.g. in a foreign country, whose body has not been
burnt in accordance with custom, and whose bones have not been
collected, the members of his clan, or his children, take three or
five seeds or cowries (*sbai*) to a place where three roads meet.
Here they summon the spirit of the departed in a loud voice,

and throw up the seeds or cowries into the air, and when they 766
fall to the ground they say, "*to alle noh ba ngin sa lum sa* 732
kynshew noh ia phi," come now we will collect you (the idea being that the seeds represent the bones of the deceased). Having collected the seeds, they place them on a bier and perform the service for the dead just in the same way as if a real dead body were to hand. If possible, a portion of the dead person's clothes should be burnt with the seeds in the bier, and it is with this view that the coats or cloths of Khasi coolies, who die when employed as porters on military expeditions at a distance from their homes, are brought back by their friends to give to the relatives. If a person dies of cholera, small-pox, or other such infectious or contagious disease, the body is buried, but is dug up again and burnt with all the customary rites when fear of infection or contagion is over. In parts of the district upright stones called *maw-umkoi* are erected along the line of route when the remains of a person who has met with an accidental death are brought home. This is stated to be the case in the Rambrai Siemship.

MISCELLANEOUS CUSTOMS IN CONNECTION WITH DEATH.

In Nongjri, a large village in the Wár Country, the dead body 764
is placed on a bier near the door of the house, a turban being 765
tied about the head, the face being left bare and turned towards the door. In some of the Shella villages a second cremation is performed, in which a bamboo frame-work represents the corpse. This second cremation takes place when the body has been disposed of without the requisite ceremonies. The bones and ashes of the dead in Shella are in some cases kept in a cavity hollowed out of a post erected for the purpose. The bones and ashes find a temporary resting-place here, but are afterwards removed to a cromlech.

At Nartiang, in the Jaintia Hills, the head of the corpse is 764
shaved, but a tuft of hair in the middle of the head is left; this is called (*u'niuh Iawbei*), the great grandmother's lock. At Nartiang betel-nut, which has been chewed by one of the mourners, is put into the mouth of the corpse, also cooked rice. There is

1. Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 ART Khasi ART

the bones of males and females being kept in separate bundles 764 wrapped in white cloth, two women of the clan reverently carrying them in their arms, holding the bundles of bones to their breasts. One female carries the bones of the males and the other those of the females. In front of these women walks an 764 old man who scatters along the way leaves of the *dieng-shit* tree 782 and grains of rice, and when it is necessary to cross any stream or river, he ties a thread from one side of the bank to the other, [775] this is for the spirit of the departed to cross the water. Sometimes u'sam *tohrik*, a kind of long grass, is used instead of thread for the above purpose. On arrival at the clan puja-house, the bones of the males are laid on one bed and those of the females on another, the beds being bedecked with rich hangings. A cock, *u'iar kradlynti* (lit.: "the cock which scratches the way"), is sacrificed, this sacrifice being considered by the Khasis to be of peculiar significance. A pig, a cock, and a bull are then sacrificed, and portions of the above are offered to the spirits of the deceased. These offerings are known by the name of *ai-bam*, and are placed in a basket which is hung up in the house, together with the left thigh of the fowl and the lower jaw-bone of the bullock. A dance is performed that night, first [535] in the house by two women, one belonging to the clan and the other an outsider, and afterwards in a specially prepared place outside the house called "*lympung*." The *sharati*, or flute, which is played at funerals is sounded, drums are beaten, and bombs are exploded. This dancing lasts from one to nine days, the limit being always an uneven number of days. At Cherra two effigies called *Ka Puron* and *U Tyngshop* are prepared and [776] dressed up; the former is intended to represent *Ka Iawbei*, the first ancestress, and the other *U Suidnia*, the first maternal uncle of the clan. These effigies are held in the hands of the dancers. In the meantime two lines of upright stones consisting of three each, with a table-stone in front of each line, have been set up. These are called *mawkjat* or 764 *mawlynti*, and are intended to serve as resting-places for the spirits of the dead on their way to the tomb of the clan. These stones are generally not more than three feet in height, and must not be confounded with the larger stones or *mawbynna*. On the night before it is proposed to deposit the

764 211 *Iawbei khynraw*, or *ka Iawbei kpoh* (the grandmother of the family, or branch of the family). It frequently happens that there are two flat table-stones in front of the upright stones, the one on the left being *ka Iawbei tynrai*, or the first ancestress, and the one on the right *ka Iawbei longkpoh*, the grandmother of the branch of the clan to which the memorialists belong, or *ka Iawbei khynraw*, the young grandmother, i.e. the grandmother of the actual family to which the memorialists belong. In olden days it used to be the custom for the clans-
[773] people to place offerings of food on the flat table-stones for the shades of the departed ancestors, and this is sometimes the case still; but now it is more frequently the custom to make these offerings in the *iing-seng*, or clan puja-house. The flat table-stones are some 2 to 2½ ft. from the ground, and it is difficult to resist the impression that they were originally sacrificial stones, i.e. that animals or even human beings were actually
773 sacrificed upon them. In connection with this theory I would refer to the interesting folk-tale about the Kopili river. It is
782 211 here related that in olden days human victims were sacrificed to the Kopili goddess on the flat table-stone (*maw-kynthei*) at a place called *Iew Ksih*, close to the Kopili river. A careful search has been made for this stone, with the result that a flat table-stone has been found near the above village, where goats are still annually sacrificed to the Kopili. The *doloi* reports that this is an ancient custom. None can remember, however, having heard that human victims were ever sacrificed there. Yet I do not think it at all unlikely that this is the stone, locally called *Mynlep*, which is referred to in the folk-tale. At Jaintiapur and Nartiang, both of which places were the headquarters of the kings of Jaintia, there are very large table-stones. We know for a fact that human sacrifices used to take place at Jaintiapur. Is it possible that human beings were immolated on these table-stones? It would be unsafe to base any conclusion on the solitary folk-tale about the *Iew Ksih* table-stone; but the tale certainly furnishes food for reflection. The Khasis borrowed their
[777] religious customs largely from the Synteng inhabitants of
782 Jaintia, and it is possible that they may have obtained the
211 custom of erecting the table-stones from the Syntengs also,
769 and that the latter were originally used by both of them for sacrificing human victims.

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782 and that the latter were originally used by both of them
211 for sacrificing human victims. Sometimes, immediately on either
769 side of the *mawkni*, or large central stone, there are two much smaller stones called *mawksing*, or the stone of the drum, and *mawkait*, the stone of the plantain; the drum being used in all religious ceremonies by the Khasis, and the plantain relating to their custom of feeding young children on plantains. The *mawnam* must be described separately from the *mawbynna*, because they differ from them in an important particular, i.e. that the former may be erected to commemorate the father, while the latter are set up to perpetuate the memory of the ancestors on the female side of the family. *Maw-nam* consist of three upright stones and one flat table-stone in front. The large central stone is called u *maw thawlang*, or the stone of the father, and the upright stones on either side are meant to represent the father's brothers or nephews. The flat table-stone is ka *Iawbei*, i.e. the grandmother of the father, not the first grandmother of the clan, as in the case of the *mawbynna*.

211 (*c*) The *maw umkoi* have already been described. They
783 are erected to mark the sites of purificatory tanks, which
766 have been dug so that the remains of deceased persons may be cleansed from the impurities attending an unnatural death, and to counteract the adverse influence upon the clan of *Ka Tyrut*, or the goddess of death. These stones are sometimes called *mawtyrut*.

(*d*) *Maw-shongthait*, or stones upon which weary travellers
211
485 sit, are to be found alongside all the principal lines of communication in the district. It may serve as an example of these stones to describe the very interesting collection of stones at Nartiang *hát*, or market. A reference is invited to the plate which gives a representation of some of the Nartiang stones. The great height of the upright stone will at once be seen; it is 27 ft. in height and 2½ ft. thick. This stone is the largest erect stone in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills at the present day, and is a very fine specimen. The upright stones and the flat table-stones at Nartiang are called "*ki maw jong Siem*." There is no separate designation for each of them. These stones are popularly supposed to have been erected long ago by two men,

535 be a successful era in store for the people of the State. The
776 goddess on this occasion may be regarded as a Khasi Demeter,
776 although no mysteries form part of her services as at the
789 Grecian Eleusis. The Nongkrem ceremony and dance (now
● 782 held at Smit) take place in the late spring, generally in the month of May. A lucky day having been fixed, the Siem sends a ring of cane (*kyrwoh*) by way of a summons to the people of every village in the State, at the same time informing them of the date of the puja, and requesting them to attend with their offerings, consisting of goats and different articles of food. In the meantime various pujas have been taking place in the house of *Ka Siem Sad*, the Siem priestess, which it would be tedious to describe in detail. The more interesting points only will be mentioned. A fortnight before the puja and dance at Smit the *soh-blei*, or high priest, pours out libations of liquor in the *kyram-blang*, or place where the sacrificial goats are kept, and in front of the great post (of *dieng sning*, or Khasi oak), in the house of the Siem priestess. Dancing then takes place in front of the post. Later on the Siem, with the high priest and other attendant priests, walks with extremely slow gait to a small hill where a stone altar has been prepared, and sacrifices a cock in honour of *u'lei Shillong*, or the god of the Shillong Peak. A silver dish with powdered rice, liquor in a gourd (*ka'iad um*), betel-nut, and some leaves of the Khasi oak (*dieng sning*), are also necessary adjuncts of the puja. A goat is then sacrificed, and the sacrifice is followed by a dance of twenty-two men armed with swords and shields and *chowries* (fly-flaps). Having danced before the altar, the party returns to the house of the Siem priestess and executes another dance in the great courtyard. The Siem and certain selected persons dance in front of the *rishot blei*, or holy post
[341] of Khasi oak inside the house of the Siem priestess, the dancers being entertained with dried fish and ginger. Then follows the great dance of girls and men in front of her
782 house. The girls dance in the centre, taking such tiny
782 steps, that the lifting of their feet from the ground is hardly
535 perceptible, the arms held down to the sides and the eyes
301 demurely downcast. It is on this occasion that they wear the
302 peculiar silver (and sometimes gold) crowns illustrated in the

301 plate. The hair is worn tied in a knot behind the head, but with
302 a long tail hanging down the back. Rich silk cloths are worn
535 by the girls, who present the appearance of being, if any-
[292] thing, over-clothed, or, as Yule aptly puts it, of "perfect
796 parallelograms." They wear a profusion of gold and coral
782 bead necklaces, silver and gold chains, bracelets, ear-rings of
gold and any other jewellery they can lay hands on. Not only
is the whole of the family jewellery requisitioned by the fair
débutante (it is only the unmarried girls who dance), but she
borrows from her friends. The men dance round the outside of
the circle, waving fly-flaps and prancing (often nowadays wear-
[534] ing huge boots) with ungainly strides. The music necessary
for the dance consists of *tangmuri* (pipes), drums, and cymbals.
[292] This is *ka shad kynthei*, or the dance of the women. Then there
is *ka shad mastieh*, or the dance of the men, who are gaily
dressed, wearing plumes of black and white cock's feathers
(*u thaiyah*) and hold swords and shields. After gyrating
for some time, two men at a time rapidly approach one another
and clash their swords together in mock combat. They then
retire, and, after again revolving for a period, repeat the process;
then other couples follow and take their place. This goes on
until the dancers get tired or are told to stop.

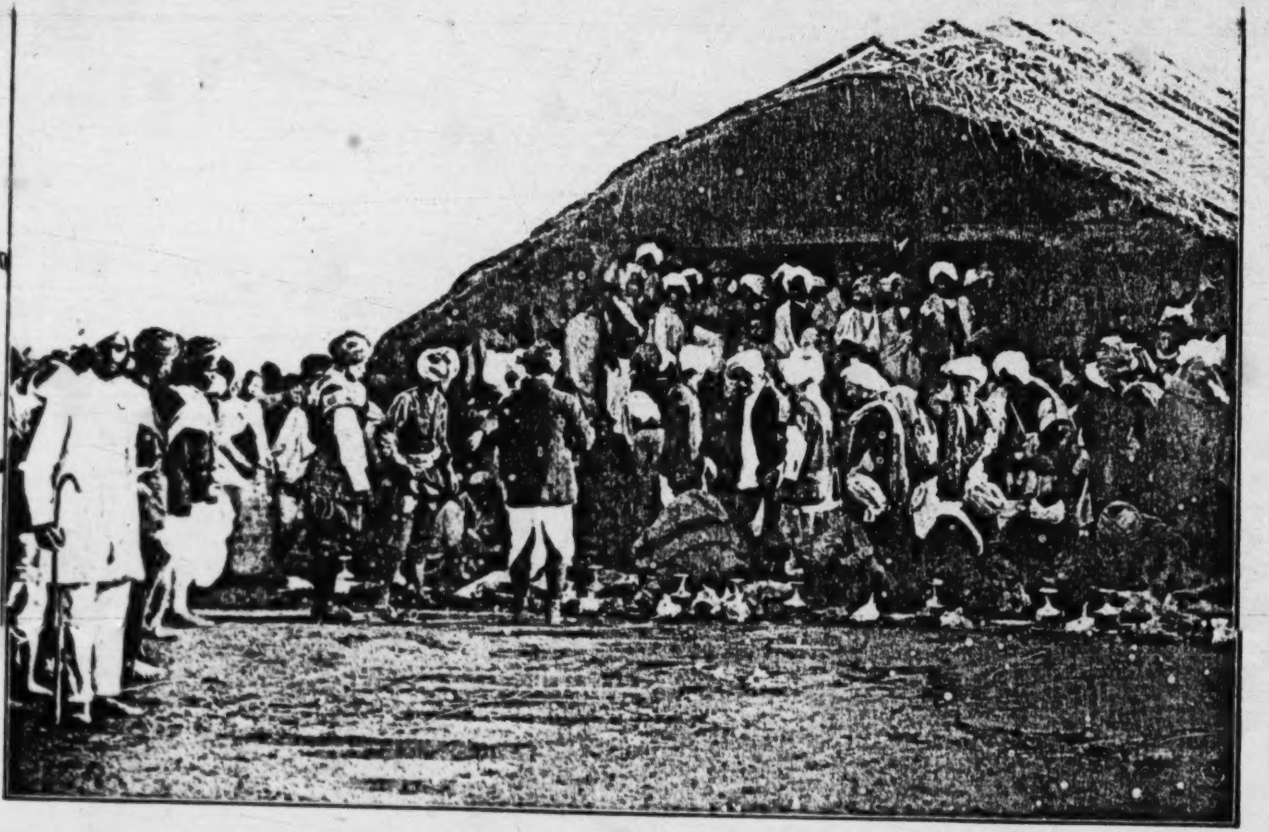
535 The above description may be taken as applicable to all
764 the Khasi dances. Dancing forms part of the ceremony
of placing the ashes in the sepulchre of the clan. Dancing also
forms a part of certain ceremonies performed at markets for
the prosperity of the State and for the good of trade.

535 When I was at Mawsynram, at the time of the appointment
of a Siem, I witnessed a very pretty dance called *ka shad
lymmoh*, performed by men who held the leafy branches
of trees in their hands. This is most effective. Then
[301] followed a dance of some forty young girls, very well dressed,
covered with the usual gold and coral beads and silver chains,
and wearing the silver crown, or *ponsngiat*. The young women
danced with great spirit and with an absence of all shyness, but
still with the greatest decorum. Many of the women, spectators
as well as dancers, were observed to be without the usual *tap
moh khlieh*, or head-cloth, the absence of which is always a sign
amongst the Khasi women of merry-making. There were

wonderful mass of granite known by the name of the Kyllang 773
Rock will be found in the section of the monograph which 133
deals with geographical distribution. I have also added a
photograph of the rock. The Syntengs have a story that
when the strong west wind blows in the spring this is due to [823]
the advent of *U Kyllang*, who comes to visit his wife, the river
Umngot, at that season: amongst the Khasis hills are all of
them masculine, but to rivers is usually attributed the feminine [193]
gender. U Symper is another isolated rocky eminence rising
from the Maharam plain close to the village of K'mawan. The
best view of the hill is obtainable from Laitmawsiang on the
path to Mawsynram. The village of Mawsmai every traveller [361]
from Therria to Cherrapunji knows. It is chiefly remarkable for [211]
a fairly large limestone cave, and its fine memorial stones. The
Khasi theory to explain how the moon got its spots is, I believe,
original, but is no more extraordinary than our own nursery
tale about the "man in the moon." The *Sohpet Byneng* hill
is the first hill of any size that the traveller sees on the Gauhati
road when journeying to Shillong. It is close to Umsning Dak [136]
Bungalow. There are caves in the hill which are tenanted by
bears. Strange to say, according to Khasi ideas, this is one of the
highest points in the hills; in reality *Sophet Byneng* is some
2,000 ft. lower than the Shillong Peak. As mentioned elsewhere, 231
the Khasis are very fond of dogs; so I have given their version of 773
how the dog came to live with man. The well-known *thlen*
superstition will be found fully described under the heading of
"Human sacrifices." I have, however, thought the tale of sufficient interest to reproduce at length here. The story of the river 773
Rupatylli is a pretty tale, and is just such a one as would 782
appeal to the imagination of mountaineers like the Khasis. 211
The Kopili story is important, in that it indicates the origin of 133
human sacrifices in the Jaintia Hills; it also throws, perhaps,
some light on the question of the use to which the flat table memorial stones were put in years gone by. The superstition about
the crossing of the Kopili can be vouched for by many who
have taken the journey from the Jaintia Hills to North Cachar
by the Kopili route. Mawpunkyrtiang is a small village close [361]
to Cherrapunji. The weird tale about the Siem of Malyniang 773
is the pride of the Maskut people, for in olden days their King,

211 U Lah Laskor and U Mar Phalyngki, to commemorate the
485 establishment of Nartiang market, which is called Iew Mawlong.
"Laskor" is the Synteng equivalent of the Khasi *lyngskor*, or
prime minister. "Mar" is a Synteng word meaning a giant,
the idea amongst the people being that in the olden days there
were giants in the land who performed marvellous feats of
strength, e.g. the erection of the megalithic remains at Nartiang
and elsewhere. A puja is performed upon a great flat stone by
the *doloi* and his officers in honour of the founders of the
market, but no animals are sacrificed, rice and *rynsi* (balls of
rice) only being offered. In the days of the Jaintia kings only
the Raja could sit upon the great flat stone; hence the name
maw jong Siem (or Siem's stone). The great upright stone is
said to have been brought by U Lah Laskor and a great number
211 of people from Suriang, a place near Nartiang. With reference
782 to the Nartiang stones I would refer to my theory, formulated
491 above, that they were originally connected with human
sacrifices. It may be mentioned that at Nartiang there is
a bridge constructed out of a single stone, which is also
said to have been set in position by U Lah Laskor. Near
Suhtnga there is a group of stones, said to have been originally
thirty in number, together with *maw shongthait*, or stones to
seat the weary, which were erected to the memory of a woman,
Ka Kampatwat, who in generations past is alleged to have had no
less than *thirty* husbands. The lady is not supposed to have
been polyandrous, nor nine-lived, but to have divorced one
husband after another. As she probably established a record
811 for divorce, her descendants afterwards commemorated her in
[731] the manner described. There is another very large stone at
Nongkseh, which unfortunately fell to the ground in the great
earthquake shock of 1897. This stone must have stood over
20 ft. above the ground. It is called *u mawkni Siem*, the
stone of the Siem's maternal uncle, and it used to form the
central stone, or *mawkni*, of a line of stones. These stones
belong to the clan of the *basans* of Nongkseh, which furnishes
the *sohblei*, or head sacrificer, of the Siems of Khyrim. The
stones at Mawsmai which in ancient days used to be the head-
211 quarters of a Siem, are some of the best carved in the hills.
171 At Mawrongjong, in the Jaintia sub-division, is a stone upon

Facing p. 154



THE SACRIFICE OF THE GOATS AT SMIT.

(from a photograph by Ghosal Brothers.)

211 which a figure, evidently of a Hindu god, has been carved, without
171 doubt after the erection of the stone. Here we have a striking parallel case to the painted and carved menhir near Tregastel in Brittany, upon which has been carved the representation of a crucifix. There are also some carved stones near Nartiang (said to represent two women) called *mawthawdur briew.*

211 The Khasis say that these great stones were brought
sometimes from considerable distances. After being hewn,
483 the stones were laid on a large, wooden trolley and dragged
283 across country by means of ropes of cane, of which plenty can be had from the Wár country on the southern side of the district, and then placed in position by means of ropes and levers. It seems little short of marvellous that these stones, which sometimes weighed many tons, were placed in position by such primitive means, especially when we consider the great trouble there was to re-erect one of the fallen stones at Stonehenge lately. Nowadays only comparatively small stones are erected, which are generally hewn and erected on the spot, so that there is no necessity for any conveyance.

000 In conclusion, it may be remarked that the subject of the Khasi monoliths is in reality a large one, on which a great deal could be written, but owing to considerations of space it has been found necessary to compress the account within its present limits.

FESTIVITIES, DOMESTIC AND TRIBAL.

535 Dancing forms the principal part of all the Khasi festivities,
776 and is an important adjunct of some of their religious
796 ceremonies. One of the greatest festivals in the Khasi Hills is
789 the Nongkrem dance; it may be said to be as important
an event to the Khasis as the *Beh dieng-khlam* festivities are to
782 the Syntengs.

The Nongkrem dance is really part of what is known as the *pom-blang*, or goat-killing ceremony, performed by the Siem of Khyrim (or Nongkrem) with the aid of his *soh-blei* (high priest) and the various *lyngdohs* (or priests) to Ka Blei Synshar (the ruling goddess), that the crops may prosper and that there may

539 [135] stands a hill; it is a very beautiful hill. From a distance it looks like the hump of a bull. It has big trees growing on it, as people are afraid to cut them because they believe that the god "Ryngkew" is there, who takes care of and protects the country. This hill has two names, U Mawlong Siem and U Lyngkrem. U Mawlong Siem is the smaller (peak) on the southern side, and U Lyngkrem the taller one, in 539 776 782 which there is a cave. The Mawsmai people sacrifice once or twice a year according to the god's demand. The Mawsmai people have, besides U Mawlong Siem, other village gods (called "Ryngkew"). The name of the one is "U Rangjadong," and the name of the other "U Ramsong." Sacri- 539 fices are offered to these two also. U Mawlong Siem is a very great and stern god. The other gods dare not engage in battle with him. He has a daughter called "Ka Khmat Kharai" (i.e. the mouth of the abyss). The god of the Umwai people fell in love with this daughter, but he was unable to obtain her in marriage, as U Mawlong Siem did not like him. It is not possible to know the exact reason why the name of U Mawlong Siem was given to him, but at any rate it appears that the name arose from the fact that in olden days before the death of a Siem there used to be heard at "Mawlong Siem" a great noise of beating of drums. The Mawsmai and the Mawmluh people used to hear it, and they attributed it to the god "Mawlong Siem," who beat the drum for his

sepngi na ka shnong. Une u lúm uba i-tynnad shibún. Ban khymih na sha jingngái u long kum u syntai masi kyrtong. U don ki dieng kiba khráw ki bým jiw don ba núd ban thoh ban daiñ namar ba ki ñiew ba u long U Ryngkew u blei uba sumar uba da ia ka muluk ka jaka. Ia une u lúm ki khot ar kyrteng, U Mawlong Siem bad U Lyngkrem, U Máwlong Siem u long uta uba kham lyngkot shaphang shathi, bad U Lyngkrem u long uta uba jerong eh bad uba don ka krem Pubon hapoh. Ia une U Mawlong Siem ki Máwsmái ki jiw ai jingknia da u blang shisin shi sneṁ ne shi sin ar sṇem katba u pan. Ki Mawmluh ruh ki leh kumjuh na la shnong. Nalor une U Mawlong Siem ki Máwsmái ki don shuh ki Ryngkew hajan shgong, uwei U Rangjadong bad uwei pat U Ramsong. Ia kine ki kñia. Une U Mawlong Siem u long u blei uba khráw shibún bad uba eh. Ki para blei kim núd ban ia leh thyma ia ki. U don kawei ka khún kaba kyrteng "Ka Khymat Kharái," u blei ki Umwái u i-bha ia ka, hinrei um lah poi namar U Máwlong Siem úm sngewbha ia u. Ban tip thikna ia ka dáw balei ba khot kyrteng Máwlong Siem ia u ym lah ban tip; hinrei la kumno kumno i-mat ba kane ka kyrteng ka la mih namar ba mynhyndái haba yn sa iap Siem la jiw ioh sngew hangta ha U Máwlong Siem ba don ka jingsawa tem ksing kaba khraw shibun. Ki Mawsmai bad ki Mawmluh ki jiw ioh sngew, bad ki jiw tharai ba u blei Mawlong Siem u teṁ ksing ban pynshád khún. Lei lei haba la

539 in the Rupatylli channel at Duwara. She was covered with shame, and she slackened her speed and split herself up into five branches, namely, ka Umtong, ka Torasa, ka Pasbiria, ka Kumarjani, and ka Duwara. Umiam did this so as to hide her shame from Umngot. This is how the river Rupatylli was formed at Duwara, to be a token that Umngot had been victorious in her contest with Umiew.*

leh khnang ba'n búh rieu ia la ka jingkhein burom ha khymat ka Umngot. Kumta sa long ka wah Rupatylli ha Duwara namar ka long ka dak ka jingjop ka Umngot ia ka Umiew.

THE KUPLI (KOPILI).

539 The Kopili river rises in the
133 "Black Mountains,"† and flows
484 northwards into the Brahma-
782 putra. It is the boundary between the country of the Syntengs and that of the Hadems.‡ Any traveller who wishes to cross this river must leave behind him the rice which he has taken for his journey, and any other food that he may have taken with him. If he does not do so, even if he crosses the river at an unforbidden point, he is liable to offer a sacrifice to the Kopili goddess. The people offer to her three fowls and three goats outside the village, i.e. one to the goddess herself, and the other two to her sons, U Shyngkram and U Jali; and five fowls, that

SHAPHANG KA KUPLI, U SHYNGKRAM BAD U JALI, KI KHÚN JONG KA.

Ka Kupli ka long ka wah na ki lúm baiong bad ka túid da artet ha ka wah Brahmaputra. Ka long ka púd ia ka ri Synteng bad ka ri Hadem ha mihngi. Uno-uno u nongleit jingleit uba kwah ban jám ia kane ka wah Blei-Kupli u don kam ba'n bred noh ia la u kháw-ryneng ha shiliang wah, bad ia ki kynja jingbám baroh phar, te un sa klan ia ka. Lada u'm da leh kumta, la'u klan na ka jaka ka b'ym sang ruh un háp jingaingúh ha ka. Ki khún-ki-hajár ia ka ba lum lái s'iar, lái blang kawei ia ka, marmar uwei ia U Shyngkram bad U Jali; bad san s'iar ba ki'n ia bám sngewbba baroh lái

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* Both rivers, Umngot and Umiew, or Umiam, have their sources in or close to the Shillong Peak. The word "*Rupatylli*" signifies in Khasi a solid silver necklace of a peculiar shape. In order to appreciate this pretty tale thoroughly, the reader ought to view the river "Rupatylli" from the heights of Laitkynsew, or Mahadeo, whence it is to be seen glistening in the sun like a veritable *rupatylli* or silver necklace.

† These mountains are the high hills which lie to the east of the Jowai Sub-Division, and which form part of the boundary line between the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District and North Cachar.

[101] ‡ The word Hadem is possibly a corruption of "Hidimba," the old name for North Cachar.

they may all three feast together; this is in the case of one transgression only. But in the case of a man who has committed more than one, it is not possible to say how many goats and fowls must be sacrificed, because the river often demands offerings on account of a man's parents or relatives having crossed the river at some time or other.

From the time of the old Siem to that of U Ram Singh Siem, they used to sacrifice to this great goddess two persons during the months of November and December at the time of offering a sacrifice at Jaintiapur. After a ceremony performed by the Brahmins at Jaintiapur, the victims are led to the Mawshai (Shangpung) market, where they are allowed to take and eat anything they like. After that they conduct them to Sumer; but some say that the stone on which the victims are beheaded is situated below the village of Ka Iew Ksi, near a stream which falls into the Kopili, and where there is a *mawkynthei* (flat table-stone) close to that sacred river.

They place the victims on that stone, where the executioner beheads them with a terrible sword. After that they throw the dead bodies and their heads into the river. But in the days of U Markuhain (U Raj Indro Singh) "who was our contemporary," they have ceased to do so out of fear of the East India Company. The victims are known by the name of "Mugha Khara."

At that time all the people of the territory of the twelve dolois were in a great state of

ngut shi khún shi kymie, kata 539
ka long haba long tang kawei 133
ka lait, hinrei haba ka'n long 484
katba shong ka lait u briew lei-lei,
ngam tip ka'n long katno blang 782
katno siar namar haba dei ka'n wan pán ka jingkñia namar ba la klan ia ka na khlieh lane na kyjat da u kyñie u kypa kano-kano ka iing lane kano-kano ka kur. Nadúh ki sngi ki Siem Tymmen haduh ki sngi U Ram
Singh Siem ia kane ka blei bah 782
ka kymai u lei ba khraw ki kñia da ki briew ár-ngùt shi snem shi snem hamar u bynái ba ki puja ne ai ngúh ha Jaintiapur, kata, hamar u 'nái wieng bad u 'nái nohprah. Ynda ki la kñia ha Jaintiapur da ki Bramon, ki sa ia lam ia ki sha ka iew Mawshái ne ka iew Shangpung ba ki'n bám shiwa katba mon na kata ka iew. Nangta pat sha Sumer, kiwei pat ki ong ba u máw ba ki khrái khlieh ia ki Muga Khara u don harum ka shnong Iewksi hajan kawei ka wah kaba túid sha ka Kupli—sha ka jaka ba don ka máw kynthei harúd kata ka wah blei Kumta ki sa kyntiw halor kata ka maw kynthei ia ki; nangta pat wan sa u nongkhrai khlieh bad ka wait ba i-shyrkhei, u khrai ia ki hangta. Hadin kata ki sa shat ia ki met-iap sha um bad ia ki khlieh jong ki ruh de. Hinrei ha ki sngi U Markuháin ne U Raj-Indro Singh uba ha Khyjong ngi mynta ym long shúh kumta namar ba u tieng ia ka Kompani. Ia kine ki briew ba ki kñia ki khot kyrteng ia ki ki Muga Khara.

Mynkata ki bynriew shi khadár doloi sngew tieng, ki ong ba ki nongkem ki da kylli shiwa ia ka jaid, ki da leh ia lade kum ki bym mut ba'n leh

782 terror. It is said that the victim-catchers, when they inquired about the clan (of their intended victims), conducted themselves as if they did not intend to do anything. When the people told their clan, then they caught them. When they heard that the people belonged to clans from which *kongngors* * were selected, they did not arrest them. When it was impossible to get hold of any one else, they sacrificed some of the (king's) slaves.

ei-ei-ruh, te ynda kita ki briw ia kiba ki mut ba'n kem ki la ia thuh ia la ka jaid ki sa kem ia ki. Haba ki sngew ba ki long na ka jaid kaba jiw long kongngór ki'm jiw kem. Te haba ym ioh eh ki kñia da ki mráw Siem.

THE VILLAGE OF MAW-PUN-KA-RYTIANG (MAWPUNKYRTIANG).

539

There was in olden days a woman called Ka Rytiang of the Siem clan. Whilst she was still a spinster, she used to go to catch fish in a stream over which there is to the present day a bridge made of a single stone, called Mawpun ka Rytiang. Whilst she was catching fish in the midst of the stream, a fit of drowsiness overtook her. At that very moment there approached her a very handsome young man, who thus addressed her: "Take this drumful of money; do not marry, and thou shalt nevertheless bear children. Thou must throw a bridge built of a single stone across this stream, thou must build thy house entirely of stone, the beams must be all of stone. Thou must spend all the money I have given thee, and if it does not suffice for thy expenditure, I shall bring more. Thou wilt remember all that I say?" She replied "yes." As soon as he

KA SHNONG MAWPUN-KA-RYTIANG (MAWPUNKYRTIANG).

Te la don mynhyndái kawei ka briew kaba kyrteng ka Rytiang, ka jaid Siem. Mynba ka dangsamla ka leit tong shér na kata ka wah kaba don u Máwpún uba ki khot hadúh mynta u Máwpún ka-Rytiang. Hamar ba ka dang tong shér ha pyddeng um ka lamshoh sam thiah hangta. Hamarkata ka por la mih u wei u briew uba bhabriew shibun eh, bad u ong ha ka, "Heh kane ka tyngka shi sing nalai; te pha wat shongkurim shuh, ho; koit, ki khun pha'n ioh hi, bad pha'n pún uwei u máwpún na Shilliang sha shilliang kane ka wah, bad thaw iing ba phán shong da ki máw suda ki rijid ki rishot, kiei kiei baroh thaw da ki maw. Pha'n pynlut kane ka tyngka baroh, bad lada ym dap ruh ngán sa wallam pat. Phán kynmáw ho ia kaba nga la ong baroh." Ka ong "haoid." Te kumne-kumne, tang shu la dep kine ki ktin baroh ba u kren, ka la kyndit na kata ka jing-

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* A Kongngor is one who has married a Khasi princess.

582 marry any one belonging to your own *kur*, or clan. Unlike the
614 Khasis, however, a Lynngam can marry two sisters at a time.
595 The Lynngam marriages are arranged by *ksiangs*, or go-betweens,
584 much in the same way as Khasi marriages; but the ritual
582 observed is less elaborate, and shows a mixture of Khasi and
Garo customs (see Section III.). The Lynngams intermarry
583 with the Garos. It appears that sometimes the parents of girls
exact bride-money, and marriages by capture have been heard
of. Both of these customs are more characteristic of the Bodo
841 tribes of the plains than of the Khasis. There are no special birth
782 customs, as with the Khasis, except that when the umbilical cord
553 falls a fowl is sacrificed, and the child is brought outside the
house. Children are named without any special ceremony.
764 The death customs of the Lynngams have been described in
Section III. A peculiar characteristic is the keeping of the
dead body in the house for days, sometimes even for several
months, before it is burnt. The putrefying corpse inside the
house seems to cause these people no inconvenience, for
whilst it remains there, they eat, carry on their ordinary
avocations, and sleep there, regardless of what would be
771 considered by others an intolerable nuisance. The religion of
these people consists of a mixture of ancestor-worship and the
propitiation of the spirits of fell and fall, which are, most of them,
believed to be of evil influence, as is the case with other savage
776 races. As with the people of Nongstoin, the primaeval
ancestress, "*ka Iaw bei*," is worshipped for the welfare of the
782 clan, a sow being sacrificed to her, with a gourd of rice-beer, and
leaves of the oak, or *dieng-sning* tree. The leaves of the oak are
afterwards hung up inside the house, together with the jaw-bone
of the pig. Sacrifices are offered to a forest demon, *U Bang-jang* (a god who brings illness), by the roadside; also to *Ka
Miang Bylli U Majymma*, the god of cultivation, at seed time,
on the path to the forest clearing where the seed is sown.
Models of paddy store-houses, baskets and agricultural implements are made, sand being used to indicate the grain. These are
placed by the roadside, the skulls of the sacrificial animals and
the feathers of fowls being hung up on bamboos about the place
793 where the sacrifice has been performed. There are no priests or
796 *lyngdohs*, the fathers of the hamlet performing the various ceremonies.

773 782 Several Khasis claim that the devil prescribed to their ancestors the method of sacrificing. On the other hand others maintain that in times past a man of rare size and strength came to their country. This man accomplished wonderful things, and commanded their ancestors to sacrifice and at the same time prescribed for them the method of sacrificing. Today the place [103] of his former dwelling on a mountain near Shillon is still pointed out. Since something divine was suspected in that man, he was called u 'lei shillong (the god Shillong).

776 The Khasi believe in a highest being, whom they call u blei nongthaw (1) (the creator god).

[194] 1. Pronounciation of Khasi (method of writing): ei is pronounced as two syllables, e - i, w is pronounced like u, aw is therefore like a - u, sh is pronounced like sch = phonetic ś.

Just as the ideas about this person are very hazy, so are the concepts of eternity and the soul.

775 The Khasi are not in agreement among themselves about the conception of what happens to the soul after death. Several say that after death the soul goes up in the air and becomes air and therefore exists no longer. But most of them believe that the soul exists after death and can be happy or unhappy. But this does not depend on personal guilt or sin but only on the conscientious completion of the burial ceremonies.

[631] 776 The country in which the Khasi live is divided into several districts, which were formerly ruled by several kings before the English came. /408/ According to the Khasi each district

776 has its own tutelary god on whom they confer the name of the district.

Villages have their own tutelary gods, families have their tutelary gods, even individual people have their guardian gods, to whom they occasionally bring a sacrifice.

The Khasi and Synteng also honor gods who are not thought of as tutelary gods but as dispensers of purely material favors, as, for example, u 'lei longspah (god of wealth) and u'lei umtong (the god of water which is used for cooking and drinking). (2)

But in general the Khasi believe that the gods or spirits are evil spirits, whom they then designate with the name ksuid (devil).

782 They believe that their country is full of such ksuid. The chief task of the Khasi is to pacify them. They try by all means to put them in a good mood, and to appease them by sacrifice. It is fear which incites them to their religious activities, not respect or actual reverence. For the Khasi are convinced that it was formerly [773] better. They relate that in the beginning heaven and earth were near together, that people could consort directly with u blei nongthaw the creator god, and that there was still no sin at that time. Now, however, man is sinful and no one offering a sacrifice forgets to pronounce the formula: nga briu nga la pop (I, man, have sinned). Thus the concept sin is one of the bases of the Khasi religion. The other basis is sacrifice. There is no doubt that sin and sacrifice make up the basic thoughts of the religious views

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2. Cf. (below, p. 410) the summarized table of some of the good and evil gods who are honored by the Khasi and the Synteng.

782 of the Khasi.

Just as the Khasi are unable to explain how man fell into sin, so they also cannot explain why the rooster appears as mediator between god and man. The Khasi tradition relates of the rooster: u khun ka blei uba kit ryndang ba shah ryndang na ka bynta jong nga u briu, i.e. he who, as son of the goddess, gives his life for man, thus expiating sin through sacrifice and reconciling god.

769 775 The Khasi believe in another world and their attention is directed towards the comfort of the spirits of the dead. One of the main tasks is to give them nourishment (ai bam), which must be done, since the welfare of the living depends on the welfare of the dead. For example, if one can no longer get the corpse of the deceased because it is in a foreign country or has been consumed by wild animals, one takes his clothes at the very least and carries out the burial ceremonies with these. For only such spirits, whose burial ceremonies were performed according to usage and custom, can participate in chewing betel nuts in the garden (in the house) of god, whereas the others must wander around on earth /409/ or must continue living in insects, birds, and other animals. They do not believe in hell (in the Christian sense). The greatest felicity [276] for a Khasi is "to chew betel nuts perpetually." Therefore they conceive of heaven as the dwelling (garden or house) of god, in which only betel nuts are chewed: uba bam kwai ha iing u blei (he who chews betel nuts in the house of god).

[776] This cult of spirits, which relates to deceased relatives, is mixed with the ancestor cult. Thus the first great-grandmother of each sib (jaid) becomes a goddess (ka jaubei) and the first great-grandfather of the sib a god (u thaulang).

776 Finally other earthly things are deified,
778 and the cult of spirits increases in objects.
782 If there is an unusually formed mountain anywhere, sacrifices are brought to it, since a ksuid lives there. And the spirit who inhabits the mountain is soon combined with the mountain itself, and then the mountain is worshipped and sacrifices are brought to it. The same thing happens with rivers. How easily a river god can be insulted and made angry by fishing or by crossing over to the other bank! Therefore the first thing to do is to bring the river god a sacrifice. The Khasi never make a picture, neither of stone nor of wood, which is supposed to represent their gods, but nevertheless they revere many powers of nature and phenomena of nature, and it is difficult to differentiate the extent to which the mountain or river is worshipped and the extent to which sacrifice is made to the spirit of the mountain or the river.

In everything that one calls bad luck or misfortune the Khasi see the work of evil spirits: in the bad harvest, in flood, in sickness. The spirits live in the primeval forest, in the steep inaccessible cliffs, in the rushing river, in the green tree. They come through the air in all weather. They give the tiger strength, the snake poison, the thicket fever, and they lurk in cholera for their victim.

782 These are the reasons for the many sacrifices and sacrificial customs of the Khasi all of which are only to bring about the reconciliation of the angered spirits. Prayers also occur during individual sacrificial scenes which one can conceive of as prayers of thanks or of praise, but these are exceptions.

The sacrifices are performed either by sacrificial priests (lyngdoh) or by old men who have experience. First one seeks out the spirit who

● 782 must be appeased by throwing eggs. If the desired [781] effect does not occur after the sacrifice has been offered, further information is sought by observing intestines (sacrifice of rooster), and the sacrifice is offered again. At least that is what is done for sickness. The other sacrifices will be described in more detail later.

771 114 The religion of the Khasi is one that arises from fear of misfortune and harm, and is active in the worship of (evil) spirits through sacrifice. This definition of mine corresponds essentially with the definitions of Bivar, (3) who says: "The Khasi religion may be briefly defined as a form to cure illnesses and to ward off misfortune, by finding out [410] the name of the devil who is the original cause of the evil and to appease him by sacrifices which are necessary," and Gurdon (4) "calls the Khasi religion a cult of spirits, i.e., actually rather a reconciliation of spirits, good as well as bad, by sacrifices, which are offered occasionally, especially in times of distress."

Table of Summary

776 of several gods (good and evil) who are revered by the Khasi and the Synteng.

1. Good Gods:

u blei nongthaw, the creator god,
u 'lei longspah, the (good) god of wealth,

[113] 3. Bivar, Administration Report on the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District of 1876.

[113] 4. Gurdon, The Khasi (London, 1907) p. 105.

787 strictest sense of the word. It is rather an
754 instinctive activity, which is influenced by
superstition to which they have succumbed. In
their opinion all misfortune and bad luck are
caused by evil spirits. The chief purpose of
[782] their sacrifices is to propitiate them (khein ban khai). But they well know that it is possible to cause others harm with the help of the ksuid. Their magic consists of this and in warding off harm. The magic is not accomplished by special magicians who make a profession of it; but whoever believes he is able to harm others with the help of the devil tries it. In the same way, those who have to ward off harm of any kind hope to be able to accomplish this with the help of the devil.

753 If anyone has a throat ailment, whether it
755 is a tumor or only hoarseness, they believe that
776 it occurs through the influence of the devil u lasamdoh. Therefore a rooster or a pig is sacrificed in the courtyard of the person concerned. The blood of the sacrificed animal is given to the sick person to drink so that he may recover.

They do similar things when a person has a toothache or is sick with some kind of mouth ailment. This sickness is ascribed to the devil u jingbih.

753 If a child is born blind they believe that
776 adultery on the part of the father is the cause. This adultery is punished in the child by the devil u kyrdep.

The demoness ka byrdaw causes attacks of cramps, and convulsive cramps are the work of the feared demoness ka shwar.

Existent ailments are made definitely worse by the devil u thyrnrei.

Whoever goes into the forest and hears the call: kâw-hoit, kâw-hoit, should hurry away because the devil u 'suid-tynjang lives there and

000 that they may also get smallpox.

776 Every Khasi is desirous of wealth. Therefore
556 they sacrifice to the demoness of wealth, ka shur, whom they fear just as much as the Synteng fear the demoness ka taro, who likewise only allows the desired wealth to come to those who revere her.

776 But all evil taken together can be caused
782 by the demoness ka ron. She is the worst of all devils in the opinion of the Synteng. The Khasi sacrifice only to her and the devil u mahet inside the hut, and not as is otherwise customary out of doors (in the courtyard of the hut).

But the Khasi have the greatest fear of the
[p.25] devil u thlen. He can be kept in the house by people in the form of a snake. Since he is only propitiated by human blood, it is necessary to find human sacrifices (ka 'langthoklieh). One cuts off the toenails and fingernails of the victims and these are brought with the blood of the murdered one during the night in a closed house as a sacrifice to the devil with prayers and exhortations. To get these human sacrifices, the thlen possessor must look for them with cunning or violence. Usually hired murderers are sent out, to whom one previously hands a quite special liquor 'iad-tang-snem (literally: lasts. for a year). The Khasi believe that anyone who drinks this liquor is so influenced (enchanted) that he will really carry out the planned murder. When these murderers (nong-shoh-noh) are on their way or waiting in ambush to catch their victim for the thlen, they may not use any iron, because the thlen near the cave of Pomdalai near Cherrapunji was killed by a brave man named u suidnoh, when the thlen appeared there in the form of an enormous snake in order to swallow up people and animals. The victim is struck down with a stick which usually has a silver knob.

776 782 Then the wings of his nose are cut with a shear, or pincer of silver and the blood is drained off. In the same way the nails on the hands and feet are cut off with silver shears. Finally th dead body is thrown into an abyss. (5)

[113] 5. For further details about "Human Sacrifice Among the Khasi", see Dr. P. C. Becker, Salvatorianische Mitteilungen [Salvatorian Communications], 1909, No. 5, pp. 75 ff.

754 782 [114] Since on the one hand many Khasi are busy trying to kill others with the help of the devil or to make them sick (ai-ksuid), and on the other hand the evil spirits also harm men without bein called upon, an enormous fear is thus the fruit of this superstition. From this fear comes the desire to make oneself free from the influence o evil spirits (lait-ksuid) or to modify this influence by sacrifices (khad) or at least to propitiate the devil completely (khein-ban khai).

796 Therefore the Synteng annually hold a large feast for driving away cholera (ka behdiengkhlam [782] The offered sacrifices have the purpose or propitiating the feared demoness ka khlam but at the same time they also have the purpose of making the participants in the sacrifice safe against cholera (to enchant them). Gurdon (6)

6. Gurdon, The Khasis.

describes this feast as follows: "In the month of June when the river is full of water, on a certain day the men go in the morning in front of the huts and strike the roofs of the huts with sticks. At the same time they call on the demone ka khlam continuously and challenge her to leave

821| moon they try to frighten the frog with noise and to drive him away. A few days ago we experienced a sample of it. In all the villages the Khasi beat drums and screamed at the same time. It was a purely hellish spectacle." (8)

8. Loc. cit., p. 62.

[415] The Khasi also have no explanation for thunderstorms. They believe, therefore, that the ksuid (devils) cause them. Especially disturbing to them is thunder, which can be extremely violent in a tropical storm. When lightning strikes 782] anywhere, they sacrifice to the ksuid u pyrthat a fat pig, the blood of which is smeared on the altar in order to propitiate him and to prevent the lightning from striking again.

782 When the Khasi sacrifice to protect themselves from harm or to heal themselves from illnesses, they murmur formulas or prayers during the sacrifice. They implore the invisible powers at the same time and thus support the offered sacrifice. They call this murmuring tim-knia (swearing-sacrificing). It is also reported thus of the sacrifices in Nongkrem: (9) "Each person places the little bottle of liquor on the little pile of mud in front of him. This represents the altar. Then they take pepper leaves and oak leaves and place them in front of the altar in a certain way next to and on top of each other; pieces of betel nut are placed on top and the whole is sprinkled with rice, kpu meal and rynsi meal, while short prayers are murmured."

[113] 9. P. Dr. C. Becker, Die Nongkrem-Puja in den Khasibergen (Assam) [The Nongkrem Puja in the Khasi Mountains (Assam)], Anthropos, IV (1909), p. 898.

782 The Khasi also erect little platforms with little houses from long bamboo sticks in which food is served to the spirits of the woods and fields (to serve [siang-] actually means spread out, as one spreads out a carpet or as one spreads out leaves for serving rice on).

[789] But not only through making sacrifices do the Khasi try to propitiate the devils and thereby make them harmless. They even try it with violence. Thus, as mentioned above, they drive the cholera demoness out of the house with sticks. Also during a cremation they shoot three arrows to ward off evil spirits.

There are many ways of warding off evil spirits; or, for acquiring their help words, wishes, or curses are used, as, for example, during a match of arrow shooting, the watchers who stand by the target try to keep the arrows of the opponents from hitting the target by calling on some god (ksuid) and the more they shriek, the sooner they believe they will attain their purpose. They wish to influence the arrows of the opponents.

3. Taboos (sang)

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772 The sang or taboos of the Khasi also belong to superstition. Sang means the same as "sacrilegiously or most strictly forbidden." This sang can be traced back to totemistic views. Sang can be something for a single person, for a house (iing) or a family, for a sib and a whole race [587 471] (jaid). If a man or a woman whose spouse has died remarries, the sang is transferred to the relatives of the deceased man or woman. This "inheritance" of the sang is different according to the sib. By accepting the sang the inheritors must pay 11 of a [[illegible]] kah or 7 1/2 of a kah or 5 1/2 of a kah. By kah the number 1200 is actually understood. But it means, however, that

781 the heir must pay 11 or 7 1/2 or 5 1/2 percent
782 of their wealth, in order to be able to pay for the great festivities at the cremation and the later disposal of the ashes. First of all various sacrificial gifts are bought with the money. When one has all the sacrificial gifts together, one erects three hewn stones in the manner of mau-bynna (urn stones) on any road. These stones are called "adulterer stones" [Ehebrechersteine] (mau-klim). Then one catches a pig and curses it in the following way: (10)

Hei sngewkyndiang ho kane nga iathuhkhana ba me ba la ioh ka sang na ka tnga ka jong me ym leh kumno kynrad wei la pom ka bneng ka khyndew, ka tyrut ka smer sngew la khuid ka sang ka ma, ka klim ka ngat ym long sa ka rong sa ka taw, sa ka sngewbha ka sngewniat moi Hei une s. u dykhot u lamjew ka iad bang ka iad thiang moi

So listen carefully to this that I am saying, thou who hast inherited the sang from thy wife; What else should we do, lord; after heaven and earth, the Tyrut and the Smer (demonesses) slay him, we are freed; the sang is made holy, the feared sang, adultery and other sins. Then it can be that the bones are transferred and peace and joy will come to us, moi (i.e it

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[113] 10. This and the following Khasi texts are taken from the kitab jingphawar by U. Rabon Singh (Shillong, 1902); I am indebted to the very worthy F.C. Becheim, Apostolic Missionary, S.D.S. of Cherrapunji, who was most willing to place his many years of experience at my disposal for the translation into German.

784 782 not so!) See here the piece u dykhot (11) and the sour things u lamjew (12) (a strong and sweet liquor) no! (is it not so!)

11. A piece of sacrificial meat.

12. Herbs, roots.

[574] All relatives and acquaintances, friends and neighbors are invited to this sacrificial feast.* There is a big festive meal, chiefly of meat and bacon. But before the eating begins, the reng (horn) and ngap (fork) which were laid on the "adulterer stone" before the cursing of the pig are removed. At this sacrifice all the money collected before (11 or 7 1/2 or 5 1/2 of a kâw) must be completely used up, as it is forbidden to preserve any of it in house so that it will not get mixed up with the daily wage or one's earnings.

[587] The remarriage must naturally occur in another sib (jaid) if the sang is to be inherited; because otherwise the sang would remain in the family.

784 Most of the sang that occur, different according to the families or the sibs, are the following: (13)

13. Gurdon, The Khasis, p. 5.

[618] 1. Building a house with stone walls on all four sides.
2. The use of iron nails in building a house.
3. The use of more than one kind of wood in building a hearth.
4. The use of resinous wood in building a house.
5. Felling wood in a holy forest (except

*[cf. ante pp. 19-21--Analyst]

787 402 342 hates stone; he does not wish any lime." (14)

14. P.A. Münzloher, S.D.S. Die apostolische Präfektur Assam [The Apostolic Prefecture of Assam] (Rome, 1899), p. 83.

4. Egg Throwing (shat-pylleng)

787 782 The most common of all the oracles of the Khasi is egg throwing (shat-pylleng). A great deal has already been written about it. (15)

[113] 15. P. Dr. C. Becker, Das Eierwerfen der Khasi [Egg Throwing Among the Khasi] Anthropos XII-XIII (1917-1918), pp. 494-496.

I will only add here the prayer of the sacrificer u nongshat-pylleng. It is not an actual prayer, at least the nongshat-pylleng is not bound to any formula. The sacrificer speaks approximately thus:

Ko lengsam khun ka blei, ko banang ko batip ko ba lah ko baiai, nga pynthiah nga pyndem halor ka diengshat ka diengkhein, ka duwan ka dupat, a kynrad ngan kylli ngan	O thou egg of the oracle, thou daughter of the goddess, thou whom thou knowest and art aware of (art able to) thou remainest thou (stayest); I put thee down here on the board (16)
togkit katne ba long shitom ka lanot ka shoh ka ther ka shit ka syang ka pisa ka lynga ia ka met u	on the oracular wood, on the altar, o mistress, I question and ponder (would like to question,

16. Cf. Table II, Picture 1. [419]

781 Donsing hato nangno ka 782 daw ba long katne don hi na kpoh la iing mo? Kaba wan thaw katne?	wish to question), for great are the troubles and the afflictions, the oppressions and the cares, the heat and the fire (of the fever), the disquietude and the depression of N.N. What is the reason that he is so badly off? Does the cause lie in the family itself perhaps (na khpoh, i.e., in the stomach, in the insides)? Has that perhaps done all this?
Lada don ka jot ka rem ka bijar ka buhkhoh ha ka blei ka Iawbei, ha u phan u kyrpad ngan sa jied ngan sa pynshai ia ka khmat ka long jot ka long rem ka bijar ka buhkhoh, don?	If perhaps a sin, a guilt, a vexation, or any annoyance exists for the goddess Jaubei or Phan u kyrpad, so will I ponder and illuminate the eye (of understanding) the corruption and the guilt, the annoyance and the vexation, which, may it be?
Jem ka mon bin kynrong ka diang joit buh ka jingkem arsnep slait, da weng ka lar ka sap ka bühsang ka tharai ong em me ym don na kpoh la iing ka ban	My will is soft as jelly and very tiny. Cross the left over the right quickly! Line up the two egg shells (slait, i.e., without any room in

787 wan thaw kum kata, khat
782 ei na wei du kaba wan
shoh ther katne.

Lar ha ka dong ngang, kiew ha ka dong roit, noh ka diang khyllon ka diang da buh lengsam shiliang kadiang!

Mynno nga bynthiew mynno nga kyrkhah mynno nga sin mynno nga rngop nga pynsum dewlieh dewtem dewani dewsnah dewraij dewkynton ba ngan iit ia ka liem ia ka dem ka pyllup ka lyndang, mo.

between), take away the white (egg white), the sacrilegious thing, (not permitted thing) and the uncertain thing! Say: no! thou! It does not come from the family that which has caused all this. Therefore it comes from outside (from somewhere else), that which strikes him and rattles down so on him.

May the white come to the outermost corner and may it climb into the corner, down with the left! May the left close together (may the left sink powerlessly together). Place the oracle over to the left, to the half!

When have I then spit out? When have I cleared my throat of the thick phlegm? When have I [420] given a nickname? When have I washed and bathed the white earth (clay, loam), white loam, yellow loam, sticky loam, heaped up loam? So that I may

	recognize that which lies towards the top and towards the bottom, that which lies on the back and on the stomach, is it not so?
Mynno nga rah mynno nga rong kum ka khlieng ka tyngab, ka ims ka doh.	When have I carried anything away, When have I dragged something off, such as the hawk or the raven or any kind of bird or meat?
Hu mo 'lengsam!	Hurrah! is it not so, thou egg of the oracle!

5. The Sacrifice of the Rooster (jingknia syiar)

Just as by egg throwing so by the sacrifice of the rooster the Khasi wish to find out the reasons that are causing illness or some other misfortune. This sacrifice of a rooster is almost as common as throwing eggs. It is especially performed when a serious case must be settled. Since the rooster is more expensive than an egg, they expect to get the desired results more readily through the sacrifice of the rooster. In general the rite is the same as described in the Nongkrem-Puja in the Khasi mountains. (17) An example of the "invocations" follows here, which the sacrificer pronounces with the following words:

17.P. Dr. C. Becker, Anthropos, IV (1909), p. 899.

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782

Te ko rangiarkhad, ko khun ka blei, ko rangkynjih ko rangkyn jai, ko rangkynih ko rangphawar ko ba ioh ka hukum ka kular na myndang long ka pyrthei, shai ka pyrthei na khmat ka blei ktien ka blei, te ha sngew nga kylli nga tohkit ha shat ha ka khan, nangno ka daw ba wan shoh wan ther katne ia ka met u Donsing?	And now, thou sacrificial rooster, thou son of the goddess, thou hopper and jumper, thou crower, thou wise-speaker (who understands how to speak in figures of speech), thou who hast received the law and the promise from the beginning of the world, Bright is the world from the face of the goddess, from the word of the goddess! So listen now, I ask, I ponder, I cast oracles, I question oracles: whence is the reason (what is the reason), that strikes N. N. and rattles down so on his body?
Ong phi ka blei manga, ka shoh te manga ka ther te manga ka sympat ka kawiat te manga, te nga shang darum-darum daneng-daneng nga kylli nangno ka long-jot ka long-rem, nangno ka bijar ka buhkhoh phi ka blei!	Say, o goddess: It is I who strikes him, it is I who rattles down on him, and I who scourges [421] and lashes him. And I go back and forth and up and down and ask, whence comes then the destruction, the incrimination, whence then the vexation and annoyance, o thou goddess!

Ong phi ka blei,
ko khun ka lamler
mynkato me ka sngi
me iapan ia ka dur ka
long briew ka long iing
na khmat nga ka blei
ka laubei nga ong!

So say, o goddess, thou daughter of lies, at that time, is it not so, (18) on that day thou hast demanded the picture of the man, the value of the family before my face, before me, the goddess, before me the Jaubei, so I say!

Khie kynmaw
sieh ka jutang na kata
ka lynti, ynda me ieng
ka nguh ka dem u ak-
hot u lamjew u kpu u
rynsi ia ka jong ka
longspah kat ia katei
ka dur ka long briew
ba me la sieh ka jutang
mynkato ka sngi.

Stand up and recall! Draw forth the promise from that way! And when thou standest there and bowest down and showest reverence, then the thanks and the reverence, then the piece and the sour thing, then the bread and the cake, to thine own well-being and wealth, as to that picture of the coming into existence of man which thou hast produced through the

18. The following words are, as it were, as if the sacrificial rooster were putting them in the mouth of the goddess and were contradicting the oracle.

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782 Mem don ka iathuhkhana ha khmat nga ka blei me tep me lynde pynban, nangta jot nga ka blei ka laubei!

Im u syiar u shan ye nangta im ka sang ka ma te nangta, im ka tyrut ka smer te nangta, ioh ka shitom ka lanot u bynriew te na kata ku lynti.

Te ko blei trai kynrad wei nga la lap ia kata ka knia ka lynti ka long-jot ka long-rem ka jong phi te mynta ngan da ieng ka kynmaw ka kyndit namar kata ka lynti kat haba shong ka nguh ka den u kpu u rynsi u klonh u ksaw, la suk la jemnud phi ka olei ka lawbei na kata ka lynti.

promise on that day.

Hast thou no tale of this before my, the goddess! before my face! Thou buryest, thou concealest it rather, and therefore the disaster, say I, the goddess, the Jaubei!

Long live the rooster, the support, and further, long live the taboo and the threat, and again long live the Tyrut and the Smer and then: man experiences suffering and sorrow, on every way thither (from birth).

Thou, however, o god and master, since I have now come along thy ground, the way of destruction, of guilt, so I raise myself up. The memory, the perplexity because of that way, wherever I may dwell, shall be the thanks, the reverence /420/, the bread and the cake, the gourd and the gourd bottle; peaceful and well-intentioned art thou, o goddess Jaubei, on that path.

787 ●782 Yn sa ioh ka khiah ka nang, ieng rangbah u bynriew joit suk me u blei lyngngai weng ka thoah ka tar ka kjab ka star.

We receive the sublime and the possible. Quickly rise up, man! Well satisfied be thou, o god! Take away the faults, the stains, the band and the sling.

Ong ym pat shong ka dur da kumta khadei dang kumwei du, kiew da ka thoh da ka tar da ka brain da ka briah da ka kjab da ka star, katta mo blei tray kynrad, kuri-ei nga pynsum nga pynsleh nga pyntang nga pynpung ha ka umthwei umlyngiam, ban kiew ka syrti ka jumai ban um ka ryndang ha khmat ka duwan ka dupat ban nang ka korbar ka sorbar mo?

Say: the picture does not yet appear thus, rather different, is it not so! Raise thyself from the great stains and from the great faults and from all the little stains and spots, from sling and band and then, is it not so, o god and master, it is in vain! I wash and bathe and make pipes of water and scooped-out wells in the eddy and in the depths, so that ka syrtieh (19) and ka Jumai (20) may arise, so that the throat may dissolve (bleed to death) before the visage of the

[776] 19. Ka syrtieh is a demoness, who cuts and scratches and files and saws, i.e., through inner pains.

[776] 20. Ka jumai is the demoness of earthquakes.

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	altar, so that the counsel be good, is it not so?
Snam syiar, hei nga dkhat sohpet shynnai ban nang ka korbar ka sorbar, kane de ka deng de ka kup ka ryndia ka muka ka iarong ka muna ho, jei dong tam dong lait ban lait ka jot ka rem mo?	Thou blood of the rooster, hurrah! Look, I tear out its navel, the intestines, so that the counsel be good. This here is the jewelry, this the garment, this the silk, this the purse and the net, is it not so? Look, here is the tube for gathering, here the tube for escaping from destruction and guilt is it not so?

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6. Discovering the Spirits that Need Appeasing (kheinksuid).

Khein ksuid means the seeking for or the discovering of the insult to the goddess which sells (die) man through suffering to the pain-causer (ksuid). The demon cannot harm man if the goddess does not stand for it and allow it. The guilt of man plays no part in this (in and of itself). The Khasi say that in their religion there is only one goddess, the "Giver of Orders" (ka nonghukum). She commands that a phan u kyrpad [423] should be, that a suid-nia of Jaubei should be [suid-nia is the spirit of the first maternal uncle of the sib, in this case he is supposed to be the "intercessor" with the Jaubei). Or she herself choses a means, that is supposed to be "god." for example, as she herself becomes the goddess of wealth or the goddess of the curse. This goddess gives the command for the sacrifices: That the piece (u dykhot) and the

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782 sour thing (u lamjew) be sacrificed! If this goddess is insulted by any kind of error, then she must be propitiated again, and this is done by the sacrifice of a goat, of a pig, or through the sacrifice of the gourd and the gourd bottle, or (for the very poor) through the sacrifice of water which one shakes out on a brass plate (ka pliang) or on a woven plate (ka pdung). It is she also who commands that one drive away the demon or the demoness, especially the demon who helps day and night (uba rap synnia rap sngi), by a sacrifice of money, a hundred or a ten, which must be brought to him.

Everything is at her command: thus the sacrifice of food which is brought the spirits (ai bam ia ki suidiap), the sacrifice of thanks which is brought the Thaulang (kaba nguh thawlang), the auguries (kaba tap ryngiew tap rywiang) or the naming of children (tap lubri tap hyrteng). For example, if a mountain devil or a river devil is supposed to be driven away, she gives the command to ask the oracle of the house first and not to make a noise. Then, however, one should take a freely chosen sacrifice, such as doves, chickens, pigs, or goats and strew them with rice and then let them run off free. Anyone who catches them may keep them.

[769] In this religion there is also something very painful and extremely difficult, namely finding out the guilt of one long since dead in order to atone for it again through sacrifice. For sometimes nothing can be found that is the reason or cause of sickness or trouble and therefore it must be the error of an ancestor that is not yet expiated. But this kind of investigation of devils is very difficult, since one cannot easily discover the connection. An experienced and worthy sacrificer who

776 understands how to interpret the signs of the
782 goddess must take this case in hand.

782 If the goddess Jaubei was insulted by an offense, a goat must be sacrificed to her. This goat must be beautiful, it must be white, it must be full-grown, but still virginal. The sacrifice is brought into the front courtyard. On the altar, which is usually prepared of loam or earth, (21) the sacrificial gifts are now spread out: bread(kpu), cake (rynsi), gourds (u klong), young oak shoots (u sning ka laliar), uncooked rice (u khaw) and fermented rice water (ka sapoh). Now the goat's head is cut off with one blow. The dead animal is cut up and the separate pieces needed for the sacrifice are placed in readiness. There are various ways of sacrificing. Some take five such pieces, others seven, and again others take nine pieces. But what is taken for the sacrifice, must [424] come from the inside of the animal (napoh krem ka kypoh, i.e., from the stomach cavity). Those who use five pieces take something from the liver, something from the heart, something from the lung, something from the kidneys, and something from the loin (of meat, the part that runs along the spinal marrow).

Those who use seven parts for the sacrifice take the above mentioned parts and in addition some of the spleen and some of the small intestine.

21. By "altar" (ka duwan) the Khasi means everything on which he offers his sacrifices, whether it be a stone, or a banana leaf, a heap of loam, or an altar made of earth.

●782 But those who use nine parts take in addition to those parts mentioned above two parts of the large intestine and of the small intestine and two parts of the appendix.

It is very hard to describe the sacrificial customs of the Khasi, i.e., to describe them quite exactly, as it is made differently in many cases. And even in the same case, for example for the same sickness or the same trouble, the sacrifices are made differently. One can readily see that in the fact that some use five parts of the sacrificed animal, some even seven parts and others again nine parts. Similar differences occur all along the line. For all cases the "piece" (dykhot) and the "sour thing" (lamjew), as well as "liquor" (iad) are sacrificed.

The method of the sacrifice depends on the relatives, that is on what the custom of [428] the sib is. The youngest daughter is the heiress of the wealth, but she is also the one who is responsible for the sacrificial rites of the sib. It is her duty to preserve the sacrificial rite which was always customary in the family (ha iing). The sacrificer (u synniang) conducts himself according to her instructions. Often many sacrificers are needed, for example at a time of plague or general trouble. Since there are now not too many sacrificers who understand the matter well, many desired sacrifices are omitted. Because of that, the Khasi believe that the rooster (u siar u shan) lives again, because of that the u longduh u longsam (evil spirit) lives again, because of that the Tyrut and the Smer live again, i.e., the evil demonic influences of these spirits become influential again through the neglect of the sacrifices.

●782 Often the head of a sib (u knie u kypa) delays the sacrifice for a decade, often for a lifetime. From this comes the difficulty for the descendants of being able to sacrifice according to the ways of the sib, since the memory of their own sacrificial rites becomes lost by the years long pauses in the sacrifices. It is difficult to revive (kynroi) the method of sacrificing. Or the old people die off (or become Christians) and so the young people no longer learn which formulas they have, which invocations were customary, which parts (of the slain animal) they should
[769] take. The relationship with the ancestors becomes lost and as a rule they can no longer remember everything.

When matters have progressed this far, then the Jaubei sees to it that sacrificing is not neglected by permitting the members of her sib to be plagued by the devils. Especially, she permits the devils of the mountains, the rivers, the water, and the air to make their harmful influences effective. Since illnesses always keep occurring and deaths [425] happen, etc., sacrificing never does quite die out and the religion of the Khasi which reverences spirits in the most varied ways remains in existence.

7. Prayer of Thanks after Receiving Good Health. (22)

Sacrifices are certainly offered chiefly in times of trouble. But the Khasi do not

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22. Cf. also the prayer of thanks and entreaty at the end of the Nongkrem-Puja, Dr. Becker, Anthropos, IV (1909), p. 902.

●782 forget a good deed received. If someone receives his health again by sacrifice, he brings a sacrifice of thanks and says:

To sngew ko blei ko laubei te wei nga la shem ia ka nia ka lynti ka long jot ka long rem jong phi, te kynrad hajar nguh te sngewsynei ho, ba la kum bieit kum lyndet nga u khun u ksiew!	Hear then! o god! o Jaubei! After I have recognized thy reasons and ways, from whence thy destruction and thy blame have come (which you have found in me), thus, o my lord, I thank thee a thousandfold, and hearken unto me graciously, since I unwittingly, since I opposed thee, I thy child and grandson!
To ai ka khiah ka nang, ngan sa kynmaw ngan sa kyndit namar kata ka nia kat haba shong ka nguh ka dem u dykhot u lamjew u kpu u rynsi u klong u ksaw lew ka shoh ka ther ka pisa ka lynga, hei wat die rem ngiat shuh ho kum kynmin kum hunne, ap ia ka nia ka lynti pyllun katta mo!	Health and wealth, it will always hover before my eyes (thy command), these causes (of the sickness), wherever I live and settle (sit down), wherever the piece inclines itself and the sour thing and the bread and the cake, the gourd and the gourd bottle, loosen (take away) the blows and the rattling down, the difficulties and the oppression! O do not sell so dear any more as yesterday and early

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today, but await with
patience the cause and
the way! So much, is
it not so! --

II. Religion in Various Aspects of Life.

553 1. Giving a Name (tap lubri tap kyrteng).

844 By tap lubri tap kyrteng one means the
782 ceremony of the giving of a name to a child. In the section on sang I have already indicated the various taboos of a pregnant mother in regard to her husband.

At the birth of a child now, so the Khasi say, there are not as many ceremonies as at the death of a relative. For birth is anyhow in and of itself a feast of joy, since one is more joyful when a person enters life than when he departs from life.

[626] When a child is born, sacrifices are made on the next day (if it was born in the evening or in the night, on the following morning) and the ceremony of giving the name is performed. The sacrificer must be a relative of the child's. Among the Synteng, aunts of the child are called on by preference as executors of the sacrifice. The umbilical chord is cut off with a sharp-edged piece of bamboo and the child is bathed in warm water. The afterbirth (ka shynnai) is carefully kept in an earthern pot in the house (nongpei). Instruments are then placed at the child's side as symbols of later occupations, near a girl a knife (i wait) and a woven bamboo carrier (i star); but near a boy a bow (ka tyntieh) and three arrows (ki 'nam). The sacrificer fetches a little plate, on which he sprinkles rice meal and fills a gourd bottle (u klong) with rice brandy, which he previously mixes with water. He

553 844 782 arranges all this on a bamboo swing (u prah) and then begins the sacrifice with the following words:

Te ha sngew ko blei trai kynrad ko thaw-bynriew ko bubbynriew te ba long ka jer ba long ka thoh ban neh ka nam ban neh ka kyrteng ban long u lubri ban long ka kyrteng wei la suk la sngewbha phi ka blei ban khot da kata ka kyrteng to kein ba un long tymmen un long san un sain la ka kur la ka jaid un bad la ka khein ka bishar ba kpoh la iing mo.	And so hear, o god and lord, o creator and maker of men! for now the name-giving and the noting-down shall occur, so that the fame may last and the name be kept, after it has pleased thee, o goddess, to name with this name. Now may it (the child) live to an old age and become great and strong in his descendants and races, and may he keep and observe the commands and justice of his family.
Te sngew sa ka jong me u thawlang babha basiat te wei yn don ka sang ka kyndiah te la long kynthei la long shynrang te a un long rangbah man rangbah yn sah ka nam yn sah ka kyrteng mo!	And so hear thou also, o thou good and beautiful Thawlang, since now for once no taboo and no difficulty exist and little woman and little man are (and a child was born), so may he become big and become a strong man and may the fame remain and the name remain preserved. Is it no so!

Meanwhile the sacrificer slowly sprinkles the brandy on the rice meal so that a dough is made. Now one seeks for the name of the child.

553 844 782 While he pronounces several names, he very slowly poures the rice liquor out on the ground. The name, then, that coincides with the drop that takes the longest to free itself from the neck of the gourd bottle, is given the child. When the name is found by this method, the sacrificer makes a mark on each foot of the child with the dough mentioned above, thus giving him the name.

553 844 [427] But if somebody comes into the hut by chance while the liquor is being poured out and says something, then a name formed from these words is given the child. Then the parents and relatives of the child must eat three times from this dough. When this is all over, the father takes the placenta, sprinkles rice meal on it and swings it three times over the head of the child. Thereupon he leaves the house and fastens the jar including the contents to a tree near the hut. Today this ceremony is seldom done exactly. Usually the father only goes in the yard and buries the placenta somewhere.

553 When the father returns, his feet are sprinkled with water ban khuid ban jhiah krat i khunlung, i.e. so that the child may stay healthy. A rice cake (u purew) which was prepared earlier is now eaten by everybody. Thereupon all the relatives sit down, the relatives of the wife on the left and the relatives of the husband on the right. A piece of the rice cake (purew) is dipped in water and the toes of all the guests are wiped with it. After the end of these ceremonies the utensils which were placed at the side of the child, the bow, the three arrows, the knife and the carrying straps, are taken away and carefully fastened to the inside of the roof of the hut.

553 that a Khasi told him, [428] that all kinds of nuisance and deceptions occur with this method of name giving since one likes to save time and trouble."

"The dried fish are held by each end and cut into two pieces. Finally one wipes the yellow root that has been mixed with water on the right foot of the father, the mother, and the child."

244 782 553 Among the Synteng the following items are offered in sacrifice immediately after the birth of a child: some rice meal, eggs, roots and leaves. After the child is a month old (one often waits two months) the ceremony of the name giving is performed. This is done, if not by the sister of the mother, then by the oldest man of the sib. Sacrifices are brought again at this celebration, specifically two hens and a goat.

844 The parents of a newborn child are not allowed to cross a river, nor may they wash their clothes as long as the umbilical cord is not healed, since otherwise the mountain or river devil would harm the child.

845 Twins are considered a punishment, which has been incurred by somebody in the sib for violating a taboo. If the twins are of different sex, their bones may not later be placed in the common family grave.

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2. Sacrifices during the Illness of a Member of the Family.

[753] Usually sacrifices are made only for internal illnesses. Because the Khasi cannot explain the origin of these illnesses, they are of the opinion that a devil has caused them. He must be angry with the person concerned

755 and must now be propitiated by a sacrifice.
762 For outside illness, for example, wounds which they have incurred by falling or lifting something, they do not make a sacrifice because the cause of the illness is known to them.

For internal sickness the sacrifice is usually made in the court area if unfavorable weather does not prevent it. What should be sacrificed is determined only by the sacrificial priest (lyngdoh). If the illness is not important, an egg is sacrificed. (24) The sacrificing priest takes a rather large dish (ka pliang kyntbei) on which he places a lattice of little bamboo sticks. Now he takes an egg, caresses it, calls it goddess (ka blei), strews it with rice and smears it with red mud. Then he throws it with all his might onto the bamboo lattice. The inside of the egg runs through the lattice into the dish. He does this with one egg after another. This egg sacrifice is performed every morning and every evening until the sick person is well again. Many make the sacrifice early before sunrise and in the evening after sunset.

If the illness is of a more serious kind, chickens are sacrificed. This is done in the following way. The sacrificial priest strews rice on the chicken's head. Then places the
neck of the animal on the left index finger and holds the head of the animal down with his left thumb. Then he cuts open the chicken's throat with a knife. (25) The sacrificer

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24. See above, egg throwing.

25. Cf. Table II, Picture 2: Sacrifice of a Chicken among the Khasi.

782 now draws the bronchia out through the opening
765 he had made [sic] and according to their position he judges whether the sick person will get well or not. (26)

26. Cf. Sacrifice of the rooster, ka jingkhia sylar.

If the illness is still worse and death is feared, then the cleverest and most experienced sacrificial priests are called. Goats and pigs, and if the sick man belongs to the well-to-do, also cows are sacrificed by these. (27) All the relatives participate in the sacrificial meal with the priest.

27. Cf. above, Khein Kouid

If the illness is leading towards certain death, sacrifices are made until there is no longer any sign of life. Thus the father of a sick boy in Umpling, who himself was a sacrificial priest, sacrificed the most beautiful chickens all day long until the boy died in the evening from vomiting of blood.

Among the Synteng only rice, eggs, hens, pigs, and deer, but no cows, are sacrificed. Certainly many sibs are allowed to eat the meat of cows, but they are exceptions. Of the sacrificed animals the gods (or devils) receive only some blood. [illegible] present.

3. Sacrifices and Ceremonies for a Death.

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782 Without interruption -- until death occurs -- sacrifices are offered for a dying

763 [774] person. Whether death has occurred is determined by calling his name. If no further sign of life is observed, howling and wailing begin to announce the mourning. Tears are extremely rare.

764 The dead person is bathed and washed (pynsum-pynsleh), wrapped in his clothes and reverently placed on a bamboo mat. One is particularly careful with the limbs; for the hands and feet are stretched out completely (phyneit ki kjat ki kti) and placed straight (pynthiah beit). To indicate mourning one does not wind the dead man's turban from right to left as usual but the other way around. In the territory of Lamin one puts betel nuts, which are wrapped in pepper leaves, between the turban and the forehead. These betel nuts are placed in a row so that they look like a crown or wreath. Every morning and every evening, as long as the body is in the house, one places cooked rice and dried fish by the head of the dead man. One calls this giving ai ka ja miet ja step (morning and evening meal).

764 782 How long the dead man stays in the hut varies with each sib. Many are cremated on the day after death, whereas others several days later, but always the body stays an uneven number of days in the hut. A betel nut with a pepper leaf and lime is placed with the food as well as a bamboo beaker with (ka long kpoh) on the stomach of the dead man (in the area of the stomach). This is the start of the actual sacrifice.

The sacrificer takes a chicken, strews rice on its head, holds it ready for killing, and says while doing this:

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[130] To sngew mo ba long u krad lynti u krad syngkiang, te ba poi hi ka sngi ka ia te wei ngam lap ia ka khein ka bishar te la pom ka tyrut ka smer la pom ka bneng ka khyndew, te kynrad sngew ho, ba men leit da ba suk da ba beit ha kpoh la ka kmie ka kiaw u nie u ma waidmia ka laubei mo?

Hear, o thou road scraper, thou path scratcher, since the day and hour have come and I can no longer get along, as with sacrifice and justice, so have the Tyrut and the Smer struck me and heaven and earth have struck me and so my lord, stop then, that thou goest in peace, right and righteousness of the stomach (in the family) in peace and harmony with the uncle and the cousins. Judge thyself, o goddess Jaubei, is it no so?

Now even though otherwise only good chickens may be used for sacrifices, in this case it does not make any difference whether the rooster (u iar krad lynti) is a fine example or not. The next best is simply taken.

If the dead man is cremated "poorly," i.e. if the relatives are not in a position to pay greater costs, only this rooster and a handful of rice is sacrificed.

If the dead man is cremated "richly," i.e. if the relatives are in.ng with numerous sacrifices, a pig is sacrificed and each of the masculine relatives must give a handful of rice which is also sacrificed immediately.

Various sacrifices are offered, according to whether the dead man is to be cremated on a base built of stone as is the case of the very rich, or in a kind of coffin (shyngoid). In the first case a steer (ox) is sacrificed, in the other case a pig (u 'sniang shyngoid). The horns of the steer (u masi pyllait) are painted gold or silver. Today one does this only with gold or silver paper. Then the animal is let loose after it has been strewn with rice and sprinkled with water ('iad-um). Anybody who captures it can keep it or kill it. As soon as the animal is let loose, one calls it masi-lamrong. If one wants to set up on the cremation area bamboo poles with white cloth pieces on them as if they were flags, which is only done for the very well-to-do, a rooster (u 'iar kait) is sacrificed.

[44] Since no work may be done on the day of cremation, all the preparations must be completed, such as fetching wood from the forest ('lea kyndong), erecting the funeral pyre, arranging for the necessary sacrificial animals and other sacrificial gifts, etc.

4. The Cremation (ka jingthang).

The Khasi burn their dead. At the crematory ceremony one can distinguish various classes or kinds, either according to the wood [43] which is used or according to the catafalque (scaffolding for the body or structure above the dead person) which is erected. [illegible] differences in the wood are:

1. The cremation, for which only uncut wood is used, that is, wood as it is found without any kind of preparation. This type of cremation is made only by the very poor (uba duk eh) who have no more relatives. There is no sacrifice made at this cremation

764 (khlem dykhot).

782 2. Cremation in which the wood used is cut with a knife (da wait). Here a handful of rice is taken from the relatives (ka pynkham ka pyneoh) and a sacrifice offered, "the piece and the sour thing."

3. Cremation in which the wood used is cut clean as boards (ka lyntang). In this class the drum (ka ksing) and the kettledrum (ka dah) are beaten, guns (ka suloi) and the pipe (ka man, i.e., a cannon) are fired, sacrifices are offered, "the piece and the sour thing (u kykhot u lamjow)," an ox (u masi) and a pig (u sniang) are sacrificed. Usually the sword dance (shad wait) is also performed.

764 The method of cremation according to the differences in structure are:

1. Thang syrkhait is that type of cremation in which no kind of catafalque (structure) is used. In this case the dead person is placed on a kind of bamboo lattice work.

2. Thang lyngkhasen is that form of cremation for which a catafalque is erected. The dead person is put in a kind of coffin made of young slender trees, bamboo, and boards. This coffin is covered with red cloth with decorations of silver edgings. Over the body, which one does not see, a structure is erected of flowering bushes and figures. One likes to make a peacock of wood to which paper is attached. (28) The whole thing is

28. This ceremony might have originated

764 a shield, bow, arrow, and knife (wait) are placed beside the man and ornaments beside a woman. All this, however, is not burned, but is taken away before the fire is lighted, with the exception of the woolen or silk cloth that is attached to the upper ends of the bamboo poles. If the corpse has received money and food, a sacrifice is offered, usually a goat. Poorer people pour a little brandy on the ground.

Now the funeral procession moves towards the place of cremation. This place is designated in each village and is usually located on the slopes near oak forests.(29) As previously during the night, when the dead man lay in the hut, guns are also shot off now, and if the people have wealth, paper bombs are set off. On the way copper coins are distributed to poor people. The tom-tom resounds, the eternal, monotonous beat on the large drum and the melancholy piping of the flutes (sharati). With great wailing from the mourners, in which the women relatives of the dead person excel, they finally reach the place of cremation, which is not sought out until late in the afternoon.

First a goat (u'lang mawkjat) is sacrificed
782 here. Then the body is lifted up on the catafalque, which has already been prepared, with his head towards the west and his feet towards the east. A rooster is now sacrificed, which they call 'iar syngkhong. If the deceased is well-to-do, a he-goat is also slaughtered,

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29. Cf. Table II, Picture 3: Place of Cremation of the Khasi with a stone substructure.

764 782 which is called u 'lang sait ksuid or "the he-goat which washes off the devil." The meaning of this is: the he-goat is similar to the "scapegoat" which takes the sins of the deceased upon himself.

Among the poor (that is among those who only use uncut wood as well as those who use wood cut with the ka wait) there is no funeral.

Now the closest relatives start the fire and after these the children of the deceased, if there are any present, apply fire. The cloth on the upper end of the bamboo poles flame brightly and is burned up in no time. The few clothes of the deceased are also soon in flames and then the actual burning of the body begins.

If the pile of wood catches fire, a rooster u 'iar padat is sacrificed immediately. This rooster is swung three times over the funeral pyre just as one swings incense and its blood is smeared three times on the pyre. Then the "stomach egg" (leng kpoh) is broken at the head end of the funeral pyre. Then three ar-
[625] rows ('nam tympem) [631] are thrown by hand as far as one can in three directions. One to the east, one to the south, and the third to
[776] the north. But never to the west. Because according to the belief of the Khasi the west leads to the unending, thither go the souls of the dead, there lies eternity. (30)

[626] 30. when the Khasi would like to have somebody go far away and they curse him, they speak as follows: to leit sha ban sep ka sngi shaba mih u bnai, i.e., go away where the sun sets and the moon rises! (Go away where the pepper grows.)

000 (Go away where the pepper grows.)

764 Meanwhile others are completely occupied with the burning of the body. Soon the intestines pour out into the fire, whereupon they begin to sizzle. A horrible smell comes from the crackling intestines. The steam that is developing in the skull from the fire causes a violent explosion in the skull which sounds like a gunshot. After the pile of wood has burned down and the yellowish green smoke has gone, you still see in the bluish fire the outlines of the black, steaming and cooking corpse. Now the men, who are already quite drunk from rice brandy, poke around in the fire with bamboo sticks and pour liquor and oil on it, which causes the flames to blaze up again. I saw in Lamin at a cremation that the heart was left as the last thing, which was then burned by itself with great sadness on the [273] part of the cremators. The objectionable scene of cremation could not occur without an [782] excess taking of alchohol. As a conclusion a goat is sacrificed (u 'lang dholia) on the spot and the relatives take their departure as they place betel nuts on the burned up funeral pyre with these words: khublei khie leit bam kwai ha iing u blei (god guard thee, go and eat betel nuts in the house of god!

In some places it is customary before the cremation for a man to get drunk with liquor. He then represents the devil and performs.ab all sorts of tricks.

764
782 When the corpse is burned, one then collects the remains of the bones which did not quite get burned up. (31) These are washed

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31. Cf. Table III, Picture 1: Collecting the Remains and the Bones

764
782 that are not burned up and the Ashes (among the Khasi).

and wraped in a small piece of cloth and then put in an urn (jar). While a woman is doing this, a man strews rice on the ground and entreats the spirit of the deceased not to disturb his relatives who have remained behind in the world, since everything was done correctly at the cremation. When this entreaty is finished, the urn with the remains of the bones is placed under the tombstone (maw shying) The remains of poor people are also put undr this stone but not in an urn. The sacrifiial rice (ka japha) is also placed by the urn as food for the deceased (cf. the next setion).

765
782 Early the next day they count up together the expeditures they have had. Speeches are made by the u kni u kpa (the maternal uncle) to the asembled children and grandchildren. This u ki u kpa [434] has been the priest and judge of the sib up until now. Now all business stops for three days. But on the third day they gamble (draw lots - bud pylleng) with two eggs to see who will be the leader of the sib of the deceased in the future, so that one will know to whom one should turn when sacrifices must be offered or quarrls are to be smoothed out. Thereby the prepnt u kni u kpa speaks an invitation to the deceased:

Hei ap ia ka nia	So hearken unto
ka jutang ynda ia	the words of the pro-
lum ia kynshew ia u	mise! After the rela-
kur u para u khun ka	tives and brothers and
meinah ka meisan yn	sisters of the mothers-
sa tai ia ka khein ka	in-law and aunts are
bi shar yn sa long ka	gathered, we will sift

765 782 ai bam ka ai sa ia me ka kynrong ka hyntaw ka pynkhiah ka pynnang, dih sa ka kiad sa ka um mo!	our words and our sacrifices and out judgments and then will be: to care for thee and to nourish thee and to carry over thy bones and to care for thee in sickness and to make thee healthy. So we wish to drink the liquor and the water, is it no so! (32)

[273] 32. The water is a fermented rice water, that is variously called rice beer. The last sentence has the sense of an affirmation and of an oath.

Hei sngew ryngkat ma phi ka blei ka Iaubei ka nonglum nongkynshew shi khrum ka nar mo!	So hear then, o goddess, thou Iaubei, thou who has gathered us here, one and all (33) the whole sib

33. Shi khrum - actually the hollow place, the place under the house.

	and stone and iron, is it not so!

764 782 As there are various customs for sacrifices, so are the ceremonies for cremation various. It is reported (34) that on the day of cremation pigs are slaughtered by the relatives of the deceased. Those, who cannot afford to

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34. Gurdon, The Khasi, p. 133.

764
782 sacrifice pigs, bring liquor, some of which they pour out on the funeral pyre. The coffin is raised onto a bamboo bier, and some money is placed next to the body so that the spirit of the deceased can buy food on the journey. Cotton or (in the case of rich people) silk cloths are wound around the coffin, crosswise if the deceased is a man, in the form of a square if [783] the deceased is a woman. Before the bier is raised up, one throws a handful of rice and pours a little water from a jug in front of the door and sacrifices a goat. These are purification ceremonies. The funeral procession is now arranged and slowly wends its way accompanied by a great deal of music. For rich people guns are shot off in between times. Copper coins are also strewn along the way. As the funeral pyre is approached, the corpse is placed on display and the peices of meat of the sacrificed animals which lay beside the body are thrown away. Then one arranges three loaves of baked bread, an egg, the lower jawbones of the animals which were sacrificed, the left [435] foot of the rooster (u 'iar krad lyntI), a jug of water, food in a dish, and three arrows. A goat is now sacrificed. The body of the deceased is placed in the coffin, if one is used, and then lifted up on the pile of wood, with the head towards the west and the feet towards the east. Pieces of wood are placed around the corpse, and the egg ("stomach egg") is broken, not as is often supposed over the stomach of the deceased but rather it is thrown on the pile of wood in the direction of the feet. The fire is now lighted by the kur or member of the clan and then by the children, if there are any. Another rooster (u 'iar padat) is sacrificed, the blood

764
782 of which is smeared three times on the pile of wood. After the clothes are removed, the bier is broken into pieces. The edibles and the jawbones are now placed by the head of the deceased. After the sacrifice of the rooster the three arrows are shot off from a bow, one towards the north, another towards the south, and one towards the east. One calls these arrows the 'nam tympem. It should perhaps be mentioned that the number of arrows, which are shot off during the cremation, corresponds with the number of arrows which are used during the name giving. As soon as the fire is burning, another goat is sacrificed (lang dholia). In some cases all the clothes are burned with the body; in other cases the clothes are only held over the fire and then put aside for further use (which is the case only among the poor). Before the relatives and friends leave the place of cremation, they place betel nuts on the pile of wood and say farewell to the deceased with these words: "Khublei, go and eat betel nuts in the house of god" (according to Gurdon).

5. Burial of the Bones

764 There is a threefold burial of the bones, i.e., of the remains of the bones not burned up and of the ashes. But these burials are not varied for the wealthy, the well-to-do, or the poor, as in the case of cremation, but all the bones of the dead are buried three times in different places. The burial rite for the first or second burial is essentially the same. The rite of the third is considerably more ceremonial.

The first burial occurs immediately after the cremation near the place of cremation in

764 [292] on such an occasion a scarf which was decorated with gold edges and gold fringes. Whereas the relatives following next may walk and speak as they choose, the woman dressed in the scarf, who is carrying the bones wrapped in white cloth with respect against her breast, is required to be silent, not to vary to the right or to the left, but to walk in a straight line to the maw shing [sic] as far as this is possible.

764 782 Having arrived at the place, a rooster is first sacrificed, which one calls the "guide to heaven" (u 'iar krad lynti), because he is supposed to accompany the spirit of the deceased into the other world. Afterwards three loaves of rice bread, an egg and brandy are sacrificed by the sacrificial priest (nongknia), so that the ashes may rest well here. The bones are placed in an earthern pot after they are well washed, and the jar is bound with a white linen cloth. The three loaves of bread along with the egg and the left foot of the previously sacrificed rooster are placed beside the jar in the prepared grave (if one can call the hole that) and the grave is closed with a stone. Betel nuts, pepper leaves, and lime are placed on top.

b) Second Burial (maw phew)

After a while the bones in the separate maw shying are collected, but the bones of the men and the bones of the women are kept and carried separately. In a manner similar to the above the transfer into the maw phew occurs. There the bones are laid separated in the prepared places, and the usual sacrifices of the rooster, the kpu, and the liquor are offered.

2:Stegmiller-58 M-4,5(no date)1921 AR7 Khasi AR7

c) Third Burial (maw bah)

764 The ceremonial transfer of the bones from the various maw phew into the common sib grave maw bah is probably the most important of all the ceremonies [437] which the Khasi have. For not merely the precise and orderly fulfillment of every prescribed ceremony and custom, even the smallest, is necessary here, but also an emotional or spiritual preparation is needed, which neither occurs nor is demanded among the Khasi for anything else. This emotional or spiritual preparation consists in the requirement that all members of a whole sib must live in peace with each other, since otherwise the ceremonial transfer of the bones may not take place.

[787] If all quarrels and discords are smoothed out, this is determined with the greatest exactitude, and a sacrificer who is taken from the sib inquires by egg throwing and the sacrifice of a chicken, which day would be suitable for the ceremonial act. If the day is determined in this way, all the relatives of the dead meet together in the house of the group mother [Stammutter] (ing seng): the children, the brothers and sisters, the nephews and nieces (shi kur shi para ryngkat u khun ka meinah meisan baroh), the great uncles and the little uncles (u ne-bah u nierit). Standing, they call upon the goddess who has created the members of the whole sib and say:

764, 782

Kumno? hukum phi	How dost thou, o
ka blei thaw bynriew	goddess, wish that I
buh bynriew ba ngan	stand (before thee, be-
ieng ka lum ka kyn	fore thy face) to
shew ka thep ka tian	gather the hard earn-
ia u suidiap u nong-	ed, the stored up, the
iap u lor u kap	spirits of the dead,

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baroh na tynrai ka lingseng lingkhadduh?	the chiefs of the family and the old family chiefs of the deceased from the tribal house?

If the goidess now sanctions it, then they gather the sacrificial gifts and the sacrificial money (which is often thousands of rupees) to use them for the festivities.

Two women then go to the various maw phew and reverently fetch the bones that were placed there. One woman carries the bones of the male dead, the other the female ones, and both bring them to the house of the group mother, where they are ceremoniously placed and decorated with flowers and beautiful cloths. Now the spirits of the dead receive nourishment (ai bam), in that a pig, a rooster and a steer are sacrificed. The best pieces of these animals are kept in a basket in the house for a later division among the participants. The rest is sacrificed.

764
585 Then there is dancing. (35) This ceremonial dance in honor of the deceased lasts either three or five or nine days, whatever seems best (and how long the collected money lasts). A place in front of the house is festively arranged and used as the place for dancing (lympung). Music is played and liquor distributed.

764
769 On the day on which they intend to transfer the bones, the drums (ka kaing) and the kettledrums (ka nakra) are beaten, [36] the flutes (ka sharati) are blown, guns (ssici) and cannons (ka man) are shot off. An ancestral

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35. Cf. Table III, Picture 2: Ceremonial Dance in Honor of the Deceased.

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The man is the groom of the dead young girl, the old woman the bride of the dead youth. They have the two scramble for the spirits' rice (ki pyniakniah bam ka ja suniap) and have them jump ove: the rice mortar (thlong) and the rice pestle. Then arrows are thrown as far as possible, which the two people are supposed to seize. This game of catching means the driving out of demons who surround the new bah and wish to prevent the approach to the stones. Then one strews seed rice (u kaw rawai) on the road from the house to the end of the village. The two little people must now run with sticks (da ki diengduh) and thresh or beat the rice. This happens three times, one after another.

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When it has become bright day, a handful of rice is taken from each of the relatives, as well as the contribution for defraying the costs of the whole festivities. Then they fetch an "altar he-goat" (u' lang duwan), in order to cut off its head on the village altar (ha ka duwan ka shnong ka mulak). Now they make merry with drums and flags (ka ksing ka lama). The children and grandchildren sit down together and greet each other solemnly, especially the "cousin" (u kha pha). Then a shield dance (sastiah) (38) is held. They perform three rounds. Then a he-goat is slaughtered, and all dancers with the shields bow three times before the "cousin" (u kha pha). Each of the sons of the group house (Stammhaus) does the same thing.

Now everybody rises, and someone sacrifices the scapegoat u' lang sait kasid. A

38. Cf. Table IV, Picture 1: Khasi men, ready for the shield dance.

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[314] A weapon dance is performed in which the sons follow one behind the other (according to age) (39) (shad wait, i.e. weapon dance).

39. Cf. Table IV, Picture 2: Weapon dance of the Khasi at the third burial.

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782 [315] When the weapon dance has ended, they go in a procession (as above for the maw shyiing) to the maw kjat or maw lynti. Having arrived there, each of the sons slaughters a he-goat by separating the head of the animal from the body with one blow. The usual sacrifice takes place. But usually there are not a lot of he-goats slaughtered (since there is not enough money) but only one, which is then called u' lang maw lynti. The retinue or escort of the sons ends here (hangne la kut ka jinglei-it on lynti ki khun kha).

The others continue on to the maw bah. Having arrived there, they open the door (the closure of the container for the bones). A man, who is paid for it, crows three times to represent the spirit rooster iar lap. This occurs in front of the stone. Then all the spirits who are in the cave room are awakened (kyrwiew) by someone saying:

to khie to khie la wan u khun la wan u ksiew!	Stand up! Stand up! The children have come, the grandchildren have come!

Then they place the bones of the deceased inside, separated according to sex. In addition there are the sacrificial gifts: the bread and the cake, which they spread out (siang). Also morning and evening rice (i.e. cooked rice ready for eating) they place (thoh —

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pour out) on the stone, also betel nuts and pepper leaves and ka reng ka ngab (the jawbones of the [sacrificed] animals). The contribution (u khrong u khwang) is also added. Then the stone is closed.

Then they strike three times with a stick (sympat da ki dieng) on the stone, which they call tan ding (taken from fire), saying:

Hei nga tan ding	See, I come to-
nga tan thah ich don	wards the fire, see, I
uba mang uba thew u	pour out the sacrifi-
tynjuh u pan tien wat	cial gift, (40) so
leit shih wat leit win	that someone does not
ap la ka khein ka bish-	perhaps come and in-
ar pyllun ho mei, ho	fringe and seek to de-
law, ho nie, ho ma	mand a sacrifice. Do
shi khrum ka naw ka	not disturb thyself!
nari	Be calm! and await
	patiently thy time of
	sacrifice. Is it not
	so, little mother, is
	it not so, mother-in-
	law, is it not so
	great uncle, is it
	not so, cousin, is it
	not so, all ye cousins
	who are under the stone!

On the next morning they figure out what everything has cost and what has been used. Then they take sacrificial liquor and say ('suit' means actually: they take it, present it, and hold it up ceremoniously):

Hei ko nie ko ma	See, o uncle, see,
ko mei ko law ka suidiap	o cousin, see, o little

40.- i.e., I perform the ceremonies faithfully.

ko nongiap shi khrum [40] ka maw sngew ho la lut la sep katta to nang kyrsoi to nang kyrsih la iaid ka iew ka duwar ka kitnong ka bylla ka khaii ka pateng!

mother, see o grandmother of the deceased, o all ye dead, who are under this stone, listen! Thus and thus much we have used and given out, bless and increase it. May all our doings, all our household, all our daily wage, all our business make us happy!

Then they divide the remains of the sacrificial gifts (also the pieces of meat which were kept in the basket) and bow down and mourn all the deceased cousins and aunts. And when the sacrificial remains have been divided, they give everybody four to five rupees (five marks, sixty pfennigs to seven marks according to the peace evaluation) in addition and say:

Shim kein khun to leit long bynriew to leit man byn riew to roi to pa to long spah to man spah wei kumba nga la kha la long shisha bam don ka sang bamdon ka ma a yn sah ka nam yn sah ka rong yn sah ka ummat yn sah ka umpung mo.

So, take, my son, grow and be strong, be happy and successful; may thy wealth increase, as I conceived thee without shame and wrong; may thy reputation and thy honor endure, and also the tears and the wells (41) should endure, is it not so.

41. i.e., the descendants who will mourn thee.

Thus they do it to all the children one after the other. After three days they destroy

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782 the doll, whether it was (i.e. was supposed to represent) a male or a female one.

In conclusion they sacrifice a pig as a food sacrifice which they call the "doll pig" (u niang ai bam tyngshop).

After the passage of a month they sacrifice a pig again as a food sacrifice, which they call the "month pig" (u niang ai bam lait bnai).

And finally after a year they sacrifice still another pig as a food sacrifice which they call the "year pig" (u niang ai bam lait snem). (42)

42. Cf. Table I, Picture 1: Third burial place of the Khasi.

Gurdon (43) also describes this ceremony

43. Gurdon, The Khasis, p. 142.

differently, saying: "After they have arrived at the grave, the bones are washed three times in a basin (this is a custom from Cherrapunji). In Maushai the bones are exposed to the heat of a fire which has been lighted on a little platform. Then the stone door of the cinerarium is opened. The bones of the women are placed inside with the urn next to the wall which is farthest away from the door. But the bones of the men are placed next to the door. Many sibs place the bones of the men on the right side and the bones of the women on the left side. Then sacrifices of food and drink are offered the ancestors on a stone in front of the grave. The men perform a ceremonial dance with sword [44On Table I, 1. Third Burial Place. 2. the village Raliang]x

x[cf. cat. 116, p. 66 -- [illegible]]

Table II

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The Egg Oracle

Sacrifice of a Chicken

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[illegible] The Place of Cremation.

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782 [Illus. Table II, 1. The Egg Oracle. 2. Sacrifice of a Chicken. 3. The Place of Cremation.] [Illus.] Table III, 1. Gathering the Remains and the Ashes. 2. Ceremonial Dance. 3. Foot Stone and Head Stone.] [Illus. Table IV, 1. Ready for the Shield Dance. Weapon Dance.] [Ill.] and shield (three times), and the door of the grave is closed. Afterwards a flag is planted on the grave.

All the people go away, with the exception of three men. One of these sacrifices a rooster (lar tanding) in front of the grave, the second one sits behind the sacrificer and holds three firebrands in his hands, which he moves back and forth. This man crows three times like a rooster. The (third) man behind the grave listens most carefully to every noise that is noticed meanwhile in the grave. The belief actually exists, that if the ceremonies have not been performed properly, the grave will now tremble and move. When the three watchers are satisfied and convinced that there was no motion in the grave, they go home and report it to the relatives. This ceremony is called tan ding or the test by fire.

On the next morning, the woman who is the householder of the house of the group [Stam-mhaus] divides the hind quarters of the sacrificial animals among all the participants of the sacrifices. The relatives are not allowed to go to work before three days have passed. The third day is called ba angi lait.

The whole ceremony has symbolical meaning. The massive stone grave is supposed to represent a safe place for the spirits. If, however, the departed spirits are not satisfied with the whole ceremony, they will disturb their relatives in this world.*

}:Stegmiller-[illegible],}(no date)[illegible], [illegible]Khasi[illegible]

[illegible] Sacrifice and Sacrificial Customs of the Khasi by P.F. Stegmiller, S.D.S., Former Apostolic Missionary of Assam (India).

(With 6 Illustrations in the Text) [illegible]

1. The Offerers of Sacrifices:
   a) Lyngdoh,
   b) Ceremonial Introduction of the Lyngdoh.

2. The Sacrifices:
   a) State Sacrifices,
   b) Private Sacrifices,
   c) Secret Sacrifices

1. The Offerers of Sacrifices.

a) Lyngdoh.

The religion of the Khasi is an (evil) spirits worship, which has arisen out of fear of misfortune and harm and which is carried out by means of sacrifice. This definition of mine corresponds essentially with the definition of Bivar, (1) who says: "The Khasi religion may be briefly defined as a form to cure illnesses and to ward off misfortune by finding out the name of the devil, who is the original cause of the evil, and by appeasing him by the necessary, sacrifices. Gurdon (2) calls "the Khasi religion a cult of spirits, i.e., actually [illegible]

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1. Bivar, Administration Report of of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District of 1876.

2. Gurdon, The Khasi (London, 1914) p. 105.

[79] 782 rather a reconciliation of the spirits, good as well as bad, by sacrifices, which are offered occasionally, especially in times of distress."

Undoubtedly sacrifices belong to the practice of the Khasi religion. Now who offers these sacrifices? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to differentiate between the various sacrifices that are customary among the Khasi. We find there

a) public sacrifices,
b) private sacrifices,
c) secret sacrifices.

The public sacrifices are performed by specially designated persons of the male sex (lyngdoh).

Private sacrifices can be performed by the ordinary men of the people as well as by sacrificers (lyngdoh) specifically designated for this.

Secret sacrifices are offered by anybody of the masculine or feminine sex.

793 [79] The Khasi do not have priests in the actual sense of the word. There is also no caste or family from which the sacrificers would come. There is also no special school or training for beginning sacrificers. The sacrificers or lyngdoh have also no special mark of distinction. (3) To be a lyngdoh does not mean [80] having a special profession. The sacrificers are ordinary people who may have any profession which they practice. Such men only appear occasionally as sacrificers. Even the chief sacrificers, who

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3. Cf. P. Dr. G. Becker, Indisches Kastenwesen und christliche Religion [India Caste System and Christian Religion], (Aachen) p. 6.

784 preside over a whole district and are known as
793 lyngdoh rangbah (head sacrificer), are not sacrificers by profession. Thus, for example, the chief sacrificer of Lamin in the district of War is a coolie by trade and carries loads from one market to the other (Fig.1).[1] None of these sacrificers has a revered position among the people. It is rather the "fear" of them which makes them respected. For the Khasi firmly believe that the lyngdoh or even merely the ordinary sacrificers are masters over the (evil) spirits. Therefore they are very careful not to quarrel with the sacrificers, so that they will not conjure up spirits in their anger and set them on the guilty one and thus bring him to destruction.

784 The sacrificers are not actually offerers
596 of sacrifices in the strict sense of the word,
793 but only representative people at the sacrifice. For the Khasi live under a matriarchy. With a sharpness of logic and with thoroughness they have probably developed and put into effect as a social organization the most beautiful pattern of a matriarchy of anyone up to today. The mother is the head of the family, the only tie that gives the family unity; she is the sole possessor and sole owner of all property, and inheritance is only possible through her. The father has no right to the relationship of the children. These belong only to the maternal line. Even his ashes will not rest finally beside those of his wife or children, but in the grave of his mother. Whatever the father may earn or save does not belong to his children, but returns to the maternal line. It is not surprising that with such views it is also the mother who had all the spiritual power. And in reality she is in complete possession of the highest spiritual power. It is her duty to

[1] [See [illegible] ch, p [illegible] -- Analyst]

[illegible] preserve the customs of the family or kin; she must see to it that the ancient domestic customs of the household sacrifices are truly preserved; it is her duty, to keep the inherited ceremonies of the sacrifices pure and to hand them down conscientiously to the descendants. Therefore she has to arrange for the necessary sacrificial materials; she must prepare everything; she is the only one who must fast before the offering of many a sacrifice; she gives the order for the sacrifice, and she should also have to perform it herself.

But this does not happen. In reality no woman offers the sacrifice herself. (4.) She is represented by a male person. But he must be related to her on the maternal side. Usually a maternal uncle (kni) represents her. Such representation by a relative is always necessary, whether it be for a public or a private sacrifice. But not merely the degree of relationship must lie in the feminine line; there is still something else that must be observed for each sacrifice. Even though the duties of the sacrificers and their methods of sacrificing are very different and are arranged according to the customs and inherited usages in the family or in the kin or in the state or community, yet in one point they are all similar: namely, all the sacrificers must be assisted by a woman during the performance of the services referred to. She is simply called ka lyngdoh (the priestess). [illegible] Because the man must function in her name and he is only her representative at the sacrifice,

[illegible]

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4. With the exception of the secret sacrifices, about which, see later.

782 Gurdon (5) believes that his ka lyngdoh is without doubt a holdover from that time of the matriarchy in which a priestess also performed the sacrifices herself.
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783 5. Gurdon, The Khasi, loc. cit.

b) The Public and Ceremonial Introduction as a lyngdoh.

783 How does a person become a lyngdoh?[6] This
784 question can also not be answered so easily.
555 This is very different in the different districts. In general it may be assumed that the lyngdoh arises from the practice of household (private) sacrifices. Since it is the duty of the woman to watch over the sacrificial ceremonies, she will introduce one of her sons to the rite of performing sacrifices that is peculiar to the family, so that he will be able to occasionally offer the sacrifice in the prescribed manner or in case of need (sickness, death, misfortune). But because the maternal uncle is usually called upon for the sacrifices, the son who has learned to offer sacrifices will have little chance to practice this art in his own family, but rather among his maternal relatives. And the other way around, people from there who know how to offer sacrifices will be called into this household. In this way the man who offers sacrifices becomes known in the neighborhood. If he has luck with his arrangements and if success crowns his efforts, the news will spread that he is an experienced sacrificer whom the spirits obey and that he knows how to seek them out, to drive them away, or to propitiate them, as the case requires. Thus it happens that such a man is called upon again and again to offer sacrifices,

[6 [illegible]]

793 especially in touchy cases. Thus of his own ac-
794 cord he becomes a lyngdoh and the people recognise
555 him as such on the basis of his successes. Whoever is once esteemed a lyngdoh remains one for the rest of his life. Just as in our country ordinary people call a dental technician "Doctor" and a high school teacher "Professor," so the Khasi call a man who is well known for his good sacrifices their "lyngdoh," although this person would not be able to prove his right to the title officially. This way of becoming a lyngdoh is probably the usual practice in most of the cases.

793 But it is not the way everywhere. There is
794 a report from Lamin (6) that a group mother [Stammesmutter] of the lyngdohs is there. Gurdon (7) also writes about a lyngdoh tribe, from which the lyngdohs are drawn. I have never found this to happen and I have never heard of a lyngdoh group [Stamm], or a lyngdoh sib (jaid). It could certainly happen that several sons of one and the same mother could by chance learn how to sacrifice and that they all excel in it and that they all have good luck so that these brothers are all called in as lyngdohs.

But the mother concerned has by no means become a lyngdoh group mother [Stammesmutter] just because of that, and the sib involved has no claims to the title: lyngdohjaid (lyngdoh group [Stamm]). Naturally the correct art of sacrificing, which is often very involved and difficult,

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6. *Salvatorianische Mitteilungen* [Salvatorian communications], 1906 No. 6, p. 84.

7. Gurdon, *loc. cit.*

782 is more easily handed on through the children
783 than outside of the family, although that can also occur. But this teaching each other would never be a justification for a community or group /Stamm/ relationship of lyngdohs.

/314/ In those Khasi territories in which the lyngdoh are still installed by public recognition so that they may function as lyngdohs during great community or state sacrifices, it is done in the following or in a similar way.

If a certain man has been decided upon to be choosen as lyngdoh for the district, for the community, or for the kingdom, he is invited to offer his first official sacrifice. First of all he must take a purification bath. Then he must go to the top of a nearby mountain with all his relatives or electors (who are usually his relatives). This is done with great ceremony. The new lyngdoh is festively dressed. Freshly washed clothes cover his body. His turban (jingspong) is decorated with white rooster feathers. He wears a leather belt around his body on which the short Khasi quiver hangs (ka ringkap). He has a long sword (ka waitlam) in one hand and a dancing brush of goat hair (u symbiah) in the other. The male escorts are also dressed like him, but instead of the white rooster feathers they have a bunch of bright colored (thuia) flowers on their turbans. The entire distance from the house of the new lyngdoh up to the top of the mountain must be covered by dancing, which explains the ceremonial dancing clothes of the male escorts. But also the female participants in the parade, who do not have to dance, insist on appearing all dressed up even if they are not in dancing clothes. They are also dressed in freshly washed clothes. A snow white scarf on their heads and a sky-blue cloak marks them from a distance as participants in the festivities. In addition most of them wear the usual Khasi ornaments: chains of

773
772 gold and silver, of gilded beads alternating with real beads of coral. The women and girls also take some light refreshments along. They take care of the necessary pauses for quais (betel nuts) and smoking, for the Khasi are never in a hurry. Several coolies, who accompany the procession, carry the necessary utensils for the sacrifices on their backs in waterproof woven baskets (ka shang) with forehead straps (u star) woven of bamboo, while other coolies lead the living animals to be sacrificed: a goat and a rooster.

When everything is ready, a little band, consisting usually of only a flute player (ka 'tangmuri) and one or two drummers (ksing), begins to play and the procession moves up the mountain dancing. It proceeds slowly. From time
[776] to time everybody rests and the coconut pipe (ka jingdih duma) is passed from mouth to mouth. After a bite of betel nut (quai) has been taken, the procession moves on again dancing until the top of the mountain is reached. The Khasi must be known and admired because of the quietness and cheerfulness with which they do everything. There is no hurrying and haste, no rushing back and forth and no forgetting of anything. They give themselves time for everything and therefore succeed in what they attempt.

Hopping, mincing, and skipping they reach the top. If there are Khasi oaks there, the ones who have arrived break off leaves from them and strew them on the ground. Otherwise the Khasi oak leaves are brought along from home so that they can be strewn on the ground on the top of the mountain. This makes the ground holy and consecrated to the spirits. The men now put aside the swords and the dancing brush. They begin to prepare the first ceremonial sacrifice

793 of the new lyngdoh. A hole is dug anywhere in
782 the ground with a chopping knife (ka wait) and the humus (earth or loam) which is dug out is brought to the middle of the place, piled up and thus serves as the altar. [215] A gourd bottle with fermented rice water is placed on the altar beside a bunch of betel nut leaves and beside a little basket full of rice and pounded meal next a pepper leaf, and the whole is surrounded by leaves of the Khasi oak trees.

Now a circle is formed. Several men lead the goat into the ring and hold it tight by a rope. Another man seizes the goat by the hind-feet and lifts these so high that the goat is only standing on its forefeet, and since it is tied by a rope it cannot move easily.

Now the new lyngdoh steps forward. He steps in front of the sacrificial animal, head high and armed with a chopping knife (ka wait). He folds his hands and takes the chopping knife between the flat surfaces of his hands. Then he crouches down, while murmuring his verses. Everything is still around him. The lyngdoh prays, i.e., he murmurs something which is not understood, yet everyone knows that he is now speaking to the spirits. After he has done this, he stands up. Taking the chopping knife by the handle with both hands, he swings it high and cuts off the goat's head with one blow. Blood shoots out in a wide arc. The body of the animal falls sideways to the ground. [Fig. 1. The chief sacrificer of Lamin in his private occupation as a coolie]. A cry of joy bursts from the throats of the crowd when the neck is severed. Raising himself up from the blow, the lyngdoh presents the bloody knife towards all sides and then hands it over to someone else. Now he picks up the severed head from the ground and lets the blood drip on the altar and on the sacrificial

[illegible]
•972
gifts carefully placed there. Finally he sets the goat's head on the top of the little pile of earth thereby flattening it out, and thus crowns the altar with the bloody head.

Now the body of the goat is dragged over and the new lyngdoh begins to divide it. He has certainly done this many times before when he offered private sacrifices, or perhaps when he offered sacrifices for his own family, or perhaps when he was called upon by others to perform such sacrifices. But this time he is particularly happy about it. After all it is the first ceremonial sacrifice which he is performing officially. This is not as it usually is when he must sacrifice for sick or dying people and must propitiate the spirits and perform the observation of the entrails very precisely. No, this is a sacrifice of joy. He only needs to place the nine prescribed parts on the altar. He does that, taking a piece of the liver, the heart, the lungs, the kidneys, the loin, the spleen, the gall bladder, [sic] the small intestine and the large intestine. The others surround the bloody parts with leaves of the Khasi oak trees and the new lyngdoh shouts out joyfully: "The sacrifice is good!" The others repeat the cry and clap their hands as a sign of agreement. The goat is offered to the "god who commanded the sacrifice" (u 'lei Shillong). [Fig. 2. The state sacrifice at Nongkrem.]

Now a second sacrifice begins in honor of the god u 'lei lyngdoh. A rooster is slaughtered and placed in pieces on the altar. While the new lyngdoh is letting the blood of the rooster drip on the sacrificial gifts on the altar, he shouts out: "Hey! The blood of the rooster! Hurrah!"

The sacrifice is completed. Coolies pack up the sacrificial meat into the baskets that were

[Also category [illegible], p. [illegible] -- Analyst]

Stegmiller-12 M-4,5(no date)1924 AR7 Khasi AR7

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Fig. 2 p. 11
[The state sacrifice at
Nongkrem]

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Fig. 3 p. 13
[Cm throwing-playing
place]

782 793 brought along and push the sacrificial gifts to one side.

The new lyngdoh now gives the sign for the dance of joy. The men who are all in dancing clothes get up and seize the swords and dancing brushes they brought along. They place them-
782 selves one behind the other. The music begins
778 and slowly the dancers move away from the place.
835 Hopping and rocking from one leg to another, they move forward, forming a definite figure while doing it. Sometimes it is a circle, sometimes an eight, sometimes a spiral, which then slowly resolves itself. Now the dancers face each other in pairs. With loud cries each pair jumps at each other and they beat their swords together, uttering cries of joy which are seconded by the spectators. [Fig. 3. Egg throwing: placing rice]

Now they arrange themselves as at the beginning and the dance begins again. Thus the dance crosses the place several times, each time the peculiar dance (shad mastieh) ending
793 with the striking together of the swords. The
782 new lyngdoh, who has now performed his first ceremonial sacrifice which is concluded by the sword dance, declares his veneration for the god who has commanded the sacrifice. For this purpose all the men arrange themselves in order and with the lyngdoh at the head bow three times before the (invisible) god. While they are all standing, the lyngdoh takes several steps backwards and standing repeats his bow. With this the ceremony is over.

They arrange themselves in the order they came in. Dancing they go down the mountain to the hut of the lyngdoh. As soon as possible a new sacrifice [111] is offered to the u 'lei lyngdoh, the god of sacrificers. With this the new lyngdoh has officially begun his new office

§[See category [illegible], p 48 -- Analysis]

3:Stegmiller-14 M-4,5(no date)1924 AR7 Khasi AR7

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Fig. 4 p. 15
[Egg throwing:
Throwing of the egg]

Fig. 5 p. 15
[Egg throwing:
Investigation]

[222-9

772 773 and can now also appear at the public state and community sacrifices when any basis of relationship justifies it.

This ceremonial way of introducing lyngdohs is still the custom especially in the kingdoms of Kyrim and Nongkrem.

The number of active, official lyngdohs varies according to the region. A kingdom has at least one official lyngdoh. [Fig. 4. Egg throwing: Throwing of the egg.] [Fig. 5. Egg throwing: Investigation] But the kingdom [774] of Nongkrem, for example, has six official lyngdohs, who together with the king and with other lyngdohs from neighboring villages annually offer the great state sacrifice. (8) Even villages often have their own official lyngdohs.

For the services which they perform for the people by offering sacrifices, they do not receive money or a present of money. Usually their trouble is rewarded by natural products, such as a hen, a bottle of rice liquor or even, though more rarely, by a pig. Obviously they always have the right to participate in the sacrificial meal.

2. The Sacrifices.

a) State Sacrifices.

[illegible] According to the report of the last census the tribe of Khasi numbers about 200,000 people. (9) These are not unified under one ruler, but

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8. P. Dr. Becker, S.V.D., "Die Nongkrempuja in den Khasibergen" [The Nongkrem Puja in the Khasi Mountains], Anthropos, Vol. 4, (1909), p. 898.

9. P. Dr. C. Becker, S.V.D. "Im

6/ Stromtal des Brahmaputra [In the Valley of the Brahmaputra]. (Aachen: Xaverius Publishing House, 1923) p. 293.

778
64' are divided into 10 kingdoms and 15 small states (communities). In each of these kingdoms and communities an official state sacrifice is of-
782 fered each year. The smaller state units offer
776 it to the u basa shnong or to the u phan u
784 kyrpad (the tutelary god of a village), the larger one to the u 'lei Shillong (the god who has commanded the sacrifice) [sic]. The purpose of this large sacrifice is to thank the revered god for the country (kingdom or community) and to beg him to make its inhabitants
778 healthy and happy. This is shown by the prayers
786 spoken at these sacrifices, namely: "O god Shillong! for thee is this prayer, this sacrifice of goat, of hen, of kyu and rynsi (a kind of bread of rice meal or cornmeal with pounded sugar), of utensils of preparation, as thou hast given them to the royal lineage, so that once in every year Puja is celebrated in thy name, so that we may live happily, be healthy and increase, so that kings will arise, so that their honor and that of the kingdom will grow and increase and the children of the kingdom will spread out to increase thy name and thy honor." (10)

10. P. Dr. C. Becker, S.D.S., "Die Nongkrempuja in den Khasibergen" [The Nongkrem Puja in the Khasi Mountains], Anthropos Vol. 4, 1909, p. 901.

In another prayer they say: "O lord, thou who hast created heaven and earth, thou hast placed a king that we may be children of his

● 782 796 kingdom, thou hast given the sun and the moon, for reckoning the year, so that we may have Puja once in the year, so that kings may arise, the children of the valleys may increase and thrive, the children of the Khasi, the children of the Bhoi, the children of the War, so that the sacrificial gifts may increase before the face of thine altar." (11)

11. P. Dr. Becker, S.V.D., loc. cit., p. 902 (Anthropos).

782 793 642 796 At these state and community sacrifices, the official lyngdohs are the chief one to appear, who together with the ruling king or chieftain and with other lyngdohs from the villages perform the sacrifices. These annual state sacrifices are introduced and performed with great ceremony. They take place in front of the house of the s'lem sad (high priestess) of the state involved. (Fig. 2) [Fig. 6. The village chief in his sacrificial coat and ornaments].

782 796 In addition to the usual sacrificial gifts, which are grouped together on a small altar of earth and which consist of a banana leaf, betel nut leaves, pepper leaves, betel nuts, kpu and rymel, fermented rice water in a gourd bottle, and oak leaves, there are chiefly hens and goats and at the end a pig. Goats are slaughtered in great numbers, so that the chief festival day of the state sacrifice is called pom blang (the goat heads) by the people.

782 535 796 Besides the slaughtering of the sacrificial animals, the dance plays a chief part. At these great sacrifices all the dances that are customary among the Khasi are performed: the dance [Fig] of the unmarried girls, the dance of the girls and men together, but both sexes are so placed that the men form an outer circle and the girls

[See category 535, p. 19— Analyst]

782 an inner circle; the dance of the men with
535 torches; the sword dance of the men; the shield
776 dance of the men; the dance of the men in couples; the solo dance of a girl and the solo dance of a man.

All the inhabitants of the kingdom combine for the state sacrifice. With the cheerfulness peculiar to the Khasi they watch the passage of the individual sacrifices and the dances for hours at a time. In the evening of the day of the chief festival a sacrificial meal is held, in which all the sacrificers, dancers, and spectators may participate.

b) Private Sacrifices.

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In addition to the annual large state sacrifices, other sacrifices are also offered by the Khasi. These are the usual sacrifices which arise from the needs of daily life. The following can be mentioned as such:

1. The sacrifice for questioning spirits.
2. The sacrifice at the name giving.
3. The sacrifice before every important business, for example, before the market, before planting rice, before shooting arrows, before building a hut, before a journey, etc.
4. The sacrifice of thanks after recovering health.
5. The sacrifice in cases of sickness.
6. The sacrifice at the time of death.
7. Khein Keuid (the sacrifice for finding out which spirits must be propitiated. This is a matter of finding out past errors of those already dead).
8. The sacrifice at a cremation.
9. The sacrifice at the burial of bones:

● 782
- a) at the mau shing (first burial),
- b) at the mau pheu (second burial),
- c) at the mau bah (third burial).

10. The sacrifice in memory of the deceased:
    - a) the sacrifice at the end of a month,
    - b) the sacrifice at the end of a year.

These various sacrifices can be offered by the official lyngdohs as well as by other lyngdohs or even by ordinary men from the people, provided they know precisely the ritual which governs the family concerned and are guided by it.

782 A definite spiritual attitude is not required
764 for any sacrifice. There is only one exception
578 here: namely at the sacrifice for the third and
last burial of the bones in the mau bah. This may only be carried out if all relatives of the sib concerned are living in peace with each other. This must be established by the lyngdoh himself who is performing the sacrifice. If any kind of enmity or a quarrel is discovered by the investigation, the burial and the sacrifice that goes with it must be postponed until the condition of general peace in the family is fulfilled.

782 [220] As concerns the place of the sacrifices, the areas may be divided in the following way:

1. Sacrifice is made in the hut:
   at the name giving,
   after recovering health.
2. Sacrifice is made in the courtyard in front of the hut:
   when questioning spirits,
   before important business,
   in cases of sickness,
   khein ksuid,
   in case of death.
3. Sacrifice is made away from the house:
   at a cremation at the place it occurs,
   at the three different burials of the bones at the places where they occur,

• 782

at a memorial sacrifice at the place where the bones rest.

The sacrificial gifts for the individual sacrifices are the following:

1. At the questioning of the spirits: eggs, hens,
2. At the name giving: rice brandy, rice meal, eggs, roots, leaves.
3. Important business: eggs, hens.
4. After recovering health: kpu and rynsi, gourds and gourd bottles, rice brandy.
5. In cases of sickness: eggs, hens, goats, pigs, cows.
6. In case of death: egg (stomach egg), rooster, rice, pig, steer.
7. Khein kswid: eggs, gourds and gourd bottles, rice brandy, water, doves, hens, goats, pigs.
8. At a cremation: rice, kpu and rynsi, oxen, pigs, he-goats, rooster, egg (stomach egg).
9. At the burial: a) rooster, rice bread, egg, brandy,
   b) rooster, rice bread, rice brandy,
   c) pigs, rooster, steer, he-goat.
10. At the memorial sacrifice:
    a) pig,
    b) pig.

Three distinct sacrifices may be differentiated, which are repeated again and again in some form or other:

1. The food sacrifice.
2. The egg sacrifice (egg throwing).
3. The blood sacrifice with observations of the entrails;
   a)rooster (hen)
   b)goat (pig, steer, cow).

1. The Food Sacrifice.

782 An altar is necessary primarily for offering this sacrifice. This altar is made of earth and consists of a little heap of earth which has been dug out of the ground near where the sacrifice is to be offered by a ka wait (chopping knife).

The usual sacrificial gifts, ingredients, and sacrificial utensils are:

kpu: a kind of bread made of rice meal. The rice is first washed, dried, and then pounded into meal.

rynsi: a kind of bread shaped like a ballet of pounded rice meal or cornmeal mixed with sugar.

[77] u khaw: uncooked, shelled rice.
u skaw: a gourd bottle.
u kiad: rice brandy.
ka um : water.
kwai betel nut.
tympew: a pepper leaf.
sla kait: a banana leaf.
ka ding sning: leaves of the Khasi oak (botanical name: Castanopsis sp.)
u luta: a silver water container.
ka pliang rupa: a silver plate like a dish.
ka pliang kynthei: a rather large brass dish.

The sacrificing of the gifts consists in their being placed on the altar in certain forms or figures and being reddened with the blood of the animals (which will be sacrificed afterwards) or at least being sprinkled with water and rice brandy.

782
787 2. The Egg Sacrifice (Egg Throwing)

The egg sacrifice or egg throwing (shad pylleng) as it is usually called is the most

782 common of all. It is used on those occasions
787 when something must be asked about or investigated. The spirits are supposed to inform at the egg throwing where the most favorable place is for the building of the hearth (building the hut., from which forest the needed bamboo should be fetched for the construction of the hut, where the most productive huntings areas are, which is the most favorable day for setting out on a journey, in which week the cultivation of rice can begin, at which market the best sale may be expected, where a general archery contest can take place, for what reason somebody is sick, who has caused a difficult birth by a moral crime.

Lyngdohs are rarely called in for this sacrifice. For the Khasi are so familiar with egg throwing that probably most of the older men know how to do it. The process is also not too complicated, so that even a person with little practice can dare to try egg throwing. Only in very difficult cases, especially in cases of sickness, is a lyngdoh sought out to perform the sacrifice. Or also in cases in which the spirits do not wish to answer. (12)

12. P. Stegmiller, S.D.S., "Teufelsopfer" [Devil Sacrifice], Missionsverlag für Indien [Missionary Publishers for India], (1922: Vienna) p. 51.

The following objects are needed for the offering of the egg sacrifice.

1. A wooden platter which is rounded at the corners and has a handle. It is called ka dieng shad pylleng (the wood for egg throwing). The middle part is called ka lieng (the little saucer).

2. Red earth for making distinguishable the outer side of the egg shells.

778 3. Uncooked, husked rice which is placed
787 in several piles (or also only in one pile) on the gaming board.

4. Last of all eggs, which one by one, after being strewn with rice (fig. 3), are rubbed with red earth, fondled, and called by flattering names and then thrown on the gaming board with great force (fig. 4). In this process the egg bursts and the white and the yolk splatter around, while the shells are scattered in all directions. So that the soft part in the egg will not obstruct the egg shells too much, the sacrificer speaks the following before he throws: "May the clear part come into the outermost corner! May it climb into the corner! Down with the left! May the left strike together!"

(787) The position of the egg shells provides the answer (fig. 5) and the various positions means approximately the following:

1. When the small pieces of shell lie with their insides down, on both sides of the board but not on the little saucer, then the question of the egg throwing is not answered. If this happens, the sacrificer asks beforehand at the throwing of the next egg with a sad voice: "Have I perhaps sinned? Have I washed and bathed the loam? the white loam? the yellow loam? the sticky loam? the piled up loam? Oh let me know what lies below and what lies above! Let me know that which is lying on the back and that which is lying on the stomach! Oh hear me, thou egg of the oracle!"

2. If a lot of little eggshells are lying around the saucer, that means that there are a lot of reasons (for example for the illness) which cannot be found out. In this case the sacrificer will express himself approximately thus with the next egg: "Oh egg of the oracle! Has a sin, has a crime been committed? Was the tutelary

776 spirit of our village insulted? I wish to con-
787 sider and to enlighten the eye of understanding as to what may well be the cause and the guilt of the sorrow and vexation! Look hither! Very tiny is my desire and soft as cotton my will! Thou shalt say! Thou shalt explain! Thou shalt help! Oh line up the bits of shell together! Make smaller the spaces in between! Cross the left over the right! Say: No! It does not come from the family, it comes from outside, that which carries the guilt for the misfortune!"

3. If a little piece of egg shell is lying with its outside facing down at the end of the little saucer in the middle of the board, that means that the goddess wishes a blood sacrifice.

4. If a little piece of egg shell is lying quite alone at the upper end of the saucer, that means that the divinity is very angry.

Thus the Khasi have determined the meaning of all possible positions of the eggshells, according to whether they are lying up or down, in the middle, or at the end, or the side of the saucer. It is the meaning which the divinity wishes to make by the position. It is obvious that sacrifices are made until a position is finally reached which presents the desired result. Thus it happens that 80, 100, and more eggs are used at a single sacrifice.

This method of throwing eggs is the most usual. But there is a still simpler way. The sacrificer wraps the egg in a leaf (ka la met). He takes it in his left hand and strews it with grains of rice. Now he tries to press in the tip of the egg with the thumb of his right hand while uttering sayings and magic formulas. If this succeeds, it is a good sign, if not, it means the opposite. (13)

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13. P. Dr. C. Becker, S.D.S. "Das

[illegible]
[illegible]

Eierwerfen der Khasi" [Egg Throwing among the Khasi], Anthropos, 1917, p. 196.

Only in cases of sickness does the sacrificer not take the usual gaming board. In its place he uses a rather large brass dish (ka [illegible]), on which he lays a lattice work made of thin bamboo sticks ([illegible]). The broken egg runs through the lattice work into the dish and from the eggshells the sacrificer then predicts in the same way as described above, since he considers the narrow bamboo lattice work as the gaming board. (11)

11. P. Stegmiller, S.D.S., "Bei der Erkrankung eines Familienmitgliedes" [On the Illness of a Member of a Family], Anthropos, 1921-22, p. [illegible].

3. The Blood Sacrifice with Observation of the Entrails.

a) The Rooster Sacrifice (jingknia syiar).

If the desired result is not obtained by egg throwing, the sacrifice of the rooster usually follows. A rooster is dedicated to the godhead by strewing it with rice, kiad, [illegible], and [illegible]. The sacrificer now dips a sharp knife in the sacrificial water that is standing ready and then cuts through the rooster's throat. He lets the blood drip on the altar and on the sacrificial gifts. Now the observation of the entrails begins, which is not always the same but is described

787 as follows since this is the usual way. (13)
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13. P. Dr. C. Becker, S.D.S., Anthropos Vol. 4 (1909), p. 899.

"The gullet of hens is formed like a fork about in the middle between the neck and the stomach. The right part of the prong is called u Blei (god), the left u briu (man). First the rectum is looked at to see if it is perhaps empty or has any symptoms of a disease or spots. In these cases, the little fowl is unsuitable for sacrifice. But even when everything is without fault, better indications are still wanted. The forking mentioned above is looked at and the sacrificer, holding the intestine in his hand, begins the ceremony with the question: "Nga kylli nga byrthem da ka shat khan, lang rangbah u briu, dem u Blei?" (I ask and seek by throwing and by oracles, does the man rise and the god bow?) While saying that he sprinkles the forking of the gullet with a little rice with the other hand, whereby because of the convulsive trembling one part or the other actually raises itself. If "the man" raises itself, that is a good sign, since the opposite forking, the "god" then bows or stays still as a sign of agreement."

The sacrificing lyngdoh calls upon the godhead and ends with the following words: "Hey, the blood of the rooster! Hurrah! Look there, I tear out its navel, its entrails, so that the advice maybe good. This here is the ornament, this the garment, this the silk, this the bag and the net, is it not so? See here the pipe of collecting, here the pipe of escaping from destruction and the guilt, is it not so?" (14)

14. P.F. Stegmiller, Anthropos, 1921-22, pp. 420 ff.

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b) The Goat Sacrifice (pom blang).

The head of the goat is cut off with one blow. Only parts of the insides of the animal (ka ka syndi) may be taken for the actual sacrifice. Either 5, 7, or 9 parts are taken. If 5 parts are taken, they are from the heart, kidneys, lungs, gall bladder, and liver. If 7 parts are taken, parts of the spleen and loin are added. If 9 parts, the pieces mentioned above and pieces from the small and large intestines. If the parts are good, then the sacrifice is also good, but if spots and speckles are present (da ka thoh da ka tar da ka brain da ka briah) the sacrifice must be repeated, as it is nullified. The rest of the ritual is like the one described for the first celebration of a lyngdoh.

In the case of pigs, it is only observed whether liver, lungs, spleen and gall bladder are healthy.

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c) Secret Sacrifices.

Although the sacrifices already described and their offerers are in general known, a whole net of tales is woven around the "secret sacrifice." The Khasi themselves [sic] speak of them only with shyness and abhorrence. After all it concerns a human sacrifice which is offered the devil "u thlen." The fact is that these sacrifices were offered and are still offered. I myself knew two persons who fell as sacrifice to this revolting superstition between the years 1905-10.

In order to describe the secret sacrifices of the "human sacrifices" of the Khasi it is necessary:

1. to sketch the thlen tale,
2. to discuss the preparations for the

772 sacrifice — that is the murder itself.

3. to describe the offering of the sacrifice.

Following from this, several questions arise of their own accord, namely:

1. How do the people accept these facts?
    - a) the fear among the people,
    - b) the liberation from thlen,
    - c) story of former thlen possessors.

2. The position of the English-Indian government to these human sacrifices?

773 1. The Thlen Legend

776
782 About five miles west of Cherrapunji, (15) near the great waterfall Noh ka Likai, there is the cave Pomlalai, about which an old Khasi legend is concerned. The dwelling place of an enormous snake —called u thlen — which caused great destruction among men and animals was once here. People had to pass here to go to market; half of them were regularly swallowed by the thlen, the others could continue their way peacefully. It was a rule for the thlen, only to consume half the number of people or animals that came by. After many people had lost their lives in this fashion, the Khasi one day held a large meeting, a darbar, with the inhabitants of the valleys, to consider how they could

15. The following accounts are taken from the article "Menschenopfer unter den Khasi" [Human Sacrifice Among the Khasi] by Dr. C. Becker, S.D.S., Salvatorianische Mitteilungen [Salvatorian Communications] 1909, No. 5, pp. 75 ff.

remedy this great misfortune. A brave man named Suidnoh volunteered to cause a change. He began to drive goats, pigs, and cattle to the thlen to give them to the snake to eat. After he had done this for quite some time, the thlen became quite tame and trusting. One day Suidnoh brought along a piece of glowing hot iron which he held with a tongs. He ordered the snake to open its mouth so that he could give it a piece of meat. The snake believed him, opened its mouth and Suidnoh quickly thrust the glowing hot iron in its throat so that the snake burst with horrible writhings. In another gathering it was decided to cut the snake into two pieces: the inhabitants of the valley were supposed to eat one half, the Khasi the other half. Since the former are very numerous, it was easy for them to manage their portion; but the Khasi could not quite master their share and left some of it. Others say that in the village Mawpha, west of Cherrapunji, an old woman forgot to eat up her share. In short the Khasi did not quite get rid of their share and so it came about that the snake could grow again and he still lives among them up to the present day.

2. The Preparations for the Sacrifice

However the thlen is no longer the public waylayer of previous times. He has withdrawn into the interior of the houses; also he no longer is in just one place, but may be found in several. There are certain families that are considered possessors of such a devil snake and are known as such among the people. They are simply called the Nongri thlen, owners of a thlen. The thlen is cared for and secretly kept by the owner very carefully in a safe place. It is only supposed to be seen by members of the household

776 of the thlen owner. It is also said of the snake
773 that it can reduce itself to the size of a thin
● 782 thread and therefore can easily find a place in
a basket or earthern jar. Others even say that
it has the power to change itself into a cat or
a rooster or a stone and to stay with the owner
in this form.

776 782 682 The possession of the thlen is a valuable thing for the owner; for where the thlen makes his home, it brings good fortune and wealth to the family. However, the snake only does this on the condition that it is provided with human blood. If it does not receive this, it announces itself from time to time in the family concerned during the night in a dream. If its desires are still not fulfilled, it then comes bringing sickness, misfortune, impoverishment, and the like. There is nothing that the owner can do other than satisfy or propitiate the thlen by human murder. In the night he waits for his victim alone or with another whom he has hired for this purpose. Often the thlen worshippers have a so-called nongshylla, i.e., a wage earner who shares the wealth of his master for his efforts without having to bother with other work. He goes out in ambush with his master and watches hidden from the heights of a mountain, or along the road, or at the edge of the forest to see whether anyone is coming along the way. By signs or shouts he warns his master who is waiting some distance away, and then they commit the murder together. Both are usually disguised and armed with a wooden club for killing their victim. The ordinary people call these murderers in the service of the thlen as well as the thlen worshippers in general only nongshohnoh, literally, killers. They may not use iron weapons for committing their dark deeds, as iron proved to be fatal for the thlen tribal father, as was told

3 [cf. [illegible], [illegible] category [illegible], pp. 29-31 [illegible]]

776 shears. The tips of the hair and the finger-
674 nails of the slain person are cut off with
774 silver shears; then the murderer pricks the wings of the nose with a silver lancet and catches the blood that flows out in a bamboo tube. This is called pjar enam. Again no dish of iron or metal may be used for catching the blood.

3. The Offering of the Sacrifice.

772 The thlen owner now asks the oracle about
776 the actual time when he should sacrifice the blood to the thlen. When this is revealed, the whole family gathers together in the hut of the thlen owner (male or female) in the dark night-time. The doors are opened and costly cloths are spread out on the floor. The blood of the slain person is poured into a brass dish or a plate (ka pliang); the hair and fingernails are placed there. One member of the family begins to strike a small drum and cries while doing it: "O uncle, o father, come forth, we have done everything to make thee satisfied, and now we have succeeded. [illegible] Give us thy blessing, so that we may receive health and wealth!" They say that the thlen is only seen by the members of the household of the owner. No matter what form it otherwise has while staying in the house, at the sacrifice of human blood it appears in its true form as a snake. It is supposed to crawl out of its hiding place when called upon, then stretch itself out until it has attained its full size. It approaches the platter and waits a while in front of it until the spirit of the slain person appears standing on the platter. The spirit is supposed to laugh. The snake now begins to swallow the entire form, beginning with the feet; the victim is supposed to laugh continuously. Obviously it is difficult to find out

776 anything more certain and exact about activities
754 that are carried on in complete seclusion. The devil snake is satisfied again after receiving the sacrifice, and now pours forth a plenitude of good luck and wealth over the house.

Substitute sacrifice: Naturally it is not always easy to find a human sacrifice. In this case the thlen owner tries to help himself in another way. He sets out to catch at least some of the hair or the clothing of somebody or other and to sacrifice this to the devil snake. This means an evil fate for those, to whom the hair or the bit of cloth belongs, for the belief exists among the Khasi that the person concerned will become sick soon thereafter, will languish and die or at the very least misfortune and poverty will come to him. They are therefore very much on their guard that nothing of that sort will come into the hands of a thlen adherent. For example, if someone loses a hair, he is extremely careful to throw it into the fire at once and thus destroy it before a thlen owner can appropriate it. If the thlen owner cannot get hold of anything at all, he at least satisfies himself by throwing stones at a victim or knocking on strange doors during the night. He then calls upon the thlen to tell him that he has done his best to get booty for him but that unfortunately he was unsuccessful. The devil snake is supposed to be satisfied with this for a time until he again makes his desire for human blood known. Many heathen, on the other hand, try to get well when they are sick by putting themselves under the protection of the thlen. They give the thlen owner some of their hair, pieces of clothing, and a corresponding gift of money or food as a sacrifice for the thlen--ai thlen--in order to acquire their health again.

776 off and he was let go with the mark of Cain.

b) Liberation from the Thlen.

776 It also happens that people who revered a
● 772 thlen and sacrificed to it wish to free themselves
783 from its power and sever all connections with it.
This is called pynduh noh ia u thlen, which means throwing away, exposing the thlen. However this is connected with a great sacrifice for the family concerned. To get free of the thlen, there is no other way than to give up all their possessions. House and contents must be burned down; money and objects of value of all kinds thrown away and even the household animals must be given up. This takes place with the observance of a certain ceremony which is performed by the lyngdoh of a village with the participation of men designated by the S'iem (Khasi king). The sacrificer (lyngdoh) first asks the oracle about the place, mountains, etc., where the thlen goods should be taken. When that is found out, the ones who were the thlen owners go with the lyngdoh and the men named, as well as with a crowd of spectators to the place that has been determined upon. All the movable goods, including clothes, that belong to the ones who wish to be free, are brought here. The lyngdoh speaks an oath and then commands the thlen owners, who have been deprived of all their property down to their naked skins, to return to the village directly without looking around. Then the rest of the spectators leave. This occurs during the night. It is the superstition of the people that the devil snake is inwardly joined with property and follows it. Whoever should appropriate it therefore would also be in the power of the devil snake. The snake would climb on him as the expression says (kiu u thlen ha ki).
[Devil snake; see category 06, pp [illegible] .. Analyst]

776 Therefore nobody dares to appropriate the ob-
772 jects that have been thrown away or even to touch
773 them. Only into the house of the S'iem and into the whole royal family can no entrance be found by the thlen, and therefore some valuable things may be given to the Khasi king. This may be connected with the fact that usually on the next morning after the above ceremony nothing more is to be found of the objects that were given away. Therefore it rarely happened in former times that anyone kept a found object from fear that it might be thlen property and he might bring the thlen devil into his house with it. But if they did take an object they found, a piece of money or such, home with them, the oracle was first asked by egg throwing whether it contained any evil, and only when this was denied and the real owner could not be found did they keep a part of it; the rest had to be used for sacrificial purposes.

The immovable property is treated the same way as the movable property. Fields which the family formerly possessed lie fallow; nobody dares to take them over or to plant anything on them.
[774] But the whole village hastens to help the former thlen owners who have lost all their property. They are given clothes and rice and helped in building a hut so that they can begin an honest life again.

e) Story of a Former Thlen Worshipper.

776
573 How is all this known about the thlen,¹ many ask, if the owners try to hide their secret? An indirect answer is already given by the whole previous presentation. Then it also happens, for example, that men marry into the house of a woman who is a thlen owner. Certainly this is not always known beforehand, although real thlen

¹[demon snake; see Gur 116, pp 98 ff. --Analyst]

774 guilt. The chieftai[n] then said to us: "You
672 will pay the woman th[e] entire cost of her care
783 and agree that I have your thlen driven out and
that you give up your property; if you will do
that, nothing more w[ill] be done to you. A hut
where you can live temporarily, a cloth (???)
so that you can at cover your honour, and
rice which you need will be given you by the vil-
lage until you can again earn something. But
if you do not wish to do that then a severe punish-
ment will be meted out to you without mercy or
pity." We submitted to the judgment of the chief-
tain. He then had all our possessions carried
away and our house turned down to the ground.
And then we had to inhabit the hut which was built
for us by the command of the chieftain of the village at the
command of the chieftain. Behold, lo, this wonderful
stone was there. We reported this to the chief-
tain and he took counsel with his elders as to
what should now be done. They came to the con-
clusion that at the time of the first exorcism
the lyngdohs had not given us the command to go
home directly without looking around. We had
looked around and the thlen had come
to us again. Therefore the chieftain now com-
manded that the exorcism and de-
struction should be undertaken again. This time
we went straight home without looking around and
so we were then freed of the thlen. We have never
seen the thlen itself. This much the report
of the thlen worship." This much the report
per.

The Position of the English-Indian Govern-
682 ment in Respect to these Human Sacrifices.
792

But is it possible, many will ask, that such
crimes can occur in a British province of the
Indian Empire? Why are such things not called to
the attention of the English government and why

682 782 does the government not interfere? These things are known by the English government and it did and does its best, although the Khasi Mountains still possess their independence in part. Thorough mention of this superstitious immoral custom was made in the administrative report of the government concerning the Khasi Mountains and the Jaintia Mountains of the year 1881-82. Attached to it was the decision of the head of the government of Assam at that time (Chief Commissioner), dated August 5, 1882, in which among other things he stated: "Among the cases, which received judicial treatment in this year, were three murders of quite particular baseness: two occurred to harmless old women, one to a boy. In none of these cases was a suitable reason given, and it is believed of at least two of them that they are connected with the remarkable superstition of the thlen." After a presentation of this superstitious custom the report continues: "Many families in these mountains are known as thlen supporters or are suspected of being so and are therefore feared and avoided. Whenever a dead body is found with the marks described above (blood drawn off through the nostrils, hair, and fingernails cut off) and especially when death is not caused by a wound but by strangulation, it may be assumed with almost absolute certainty that the purpose of the murder was the propitiation of the thlen. This was observed in one of the three cases indicated; in the two others these signs could not be found; however, since there was no cause at all for a murder, it was more than probable that these two are also to be ascribed to the horrible superstition. In each of these three cases one or two persons were convicted although they might not have been the only guilty

696 ones; one man was hanged and the rest were sentenced
778 to exile either of many years or for life."

There are also cases of murder in the following years in the government reports which are ascribed to the thlen superstition. Particularly noticeable and indicative was a case which occurred in the year 1890. The murder was committed only about ten miles from Shillong, the seat of the English government of Assam, about several hundred meters to one side of the government road, which leads from there to Cherrapunji. No trace of the murderers could be discovered, since the inhabitants of the nearby village did not care to appear as witnesses against them because of their superstitious fear that this would invite the revenge and anger of the thlen. They much preferred putting up with the government's sending to the village as a punishment a division of military policemen who had to be harbored and maintained by the inhabitants for a whole year at a great sacrifice. These are the great difficulties with which the government has to struggle in spite of their best will: with the conditions that obtain there it is not at all difficult to have a person vanish without any trace; but if such a case of murder does come to daylight, it is still a long way to the punishment of the guilty ones because of the lack of witnesses or their refusal to testify. An improvement here can only come from the inside by a change in their religious views. At any rate it is a comfort for Europeans to know that their blood as well as the blood of any foreigner who is not a Khasi is not at all acceptable to the thlen and would not suffice to propitiate him.

arrows for their markings and arrange the whole contest. 526

Early in the morning on the day of the contest, each judge, accompanied by the archers and several curious people, goes to the place of the festivity. There he stands before the target, which was set up the day before. The bows and arrows are placed beside the target. The judge now proclaims aloud again 526 all the conditions of the contest. He calls 782 ● upon the Khasi Eve (ka-mei-ka-nong-hukum (25)

25. The Khasi believe that arrow [772] shooting began with the creation of the world. For the Khasi Eve had two sons. She taught them the art of arrow shooting but warned them at the same time never to lose their tempers while playing. Gurdon, The Khasis, p.55.

for her help and in a rambling speech recites all the errors of the opponents (26). While

26. The Khasi believe that the opponents' arrows will be kept from hitting the target by invoking the Khasi Eve and by the utterances of the judge. Gurdon, p. 55.

he is speaking thus, he pours water [616] from time to time out of a bamboo tube that was brought along in front of the target. Because of the talkativeness of the Khasi and their peculiarity of talking extemporaneously and their slowness this lasts about two hours.

533 S. : "Thou fledst into the thicket! Did that help thee?
Shyly thou retreated before the brave crowd of hunters!"
All: "Ha, ha, ho, huh!"
S. : "Quickly indeed thou retreated; quickly the pursuers pressed after thee and arrow and bow brought thee low!"
All: "Ha, ha, ho, huh!"
S. : "O mistress! Why didst thou come hither? Thou gavest thyself over to death and destruction — but we rejoice and celebrate and exult!"

Thus it continues for a long time. When one person has sung until he is hoarse, another takes his place and continues the song.

224 Exhausted from the exertions of the hunt, exhausted from the activity of the parade home, hoarse from shouting and screaming, heated from the enjoyment of brandy, the crowd drags itself to the house of the hunter who placed the first arrow or shot in the wild animal. Sacrifice is made there to the village god and the slain animal is divided up. The first shooter (u nongsiat) receives the hind quarters, the second shooter (u nongban) the front quarters of the animal.

In the Jaintia Hills the Synteng go to a hill in the neighborhood of the village when they have hunted and killed a tiger or a leopard. An altar is set up there under an oak tree and the head of the animal, which has been severed from its body, is placed on it and sacrificed to the u'lei lyngdoh (the god of the Dollci district). 782 224

411 778 Arrow and bow are not only necessary weapons to the Khasi for hunting or pleasant sporting equipment for archery contests; Arrow and bow are also holy to him in a certain

[703]

The Market Life of the Khasi

443 (with ten original photographs by the author)

by P.F. Stegmiller, S.D.S., Munich

[101] The mountains in the northeast corner of India which lie between the valleys of the Brahmaputra and the Barak are inhabited by a [161] tribe, the Khasi, numbering about 200,000 people. Although they rarely cross the borders of their homeland and live almost cut off from their [484] neighbors, they have an active traffic amongst themselves and travel a lot. This traveling is determined by the very distinct market life of the Khasi. It is truly the pulse beat of the people. The rest of their homelife, their activities, and their private, public, and religious life. (1) Time is divided according to the market; the market replaces the daily newspaper and the information service; the market unites the individual villages; the market offers a living to many and for many has become a source of wealth.

443
782 How much the Khasi depend on a thriving market may be seen in their prayers which are spoken every year at the great state sacrifices in honor of the god Shillong by the sacrificer (lyngdoh) presenting the service: "O god, Shillong! Thou who receivest this prayer, this sacrifice of goats, of fowl, of kpu and rynsi (a kind of bread of rice flour or cornmeal with pounded sugar), of utensils used in the preparation, as thou has given them to the royal

1. P.F. Stegmiller, "Aus dem religiösen Leben der Khasi' [The Religion Life of the Khasi], Anthropos, 1921-1922, pp. 425 ff.

race, so that once in every year a sacrifice 443
can be celebrated in thy name, so that we will 782
live happily and be healthy and increase in numbers, so that kings will arise, the markets will enjoy progress and success, and the children of the kingdom will spread out and increase in thy name and to thy honor."

After this prayer the chief sacrificer (lyngdoh rangbah) pours rice liquor (ka kiad um) out of a gourd bottle (u klong) onto the ground in honor of the goddess of the markets (ka blei jeu lei hat) and prays thus: "Hear us, o goddess, so that the markets will be good and safe and everything be blessed, so that the kingdom will progress and develop,mo (is it not so)!" (2)

2. P.F. Stegmiller, "Opfer und Opferbräuche der Khasi"[Sacrifice and Sacrificial Customs of the Khasi], Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien"[Proceedings of the Vienna Anthroplogical Society], Vol. LIV (1924).

[704] Among the Khasi, the women [The Market 443
Personnel] are so in the majority among the 462
selling personnel that it is tempting to consider them the founders of the markets. Since provisions form the chief articles of the market, and these are grown by the women, this may be the reason why the woman dominates the market. The masculine element certainly participates actively in the market, but only dealing in such articles as belong to him specially, such as dishes of iron which he has made or goats and sheep which he has raised. Although the men as an average only go to

/692/ The Nongkrem Puja in the Khasi Mountains (Assam) (1)

126 1. All the pictures attached to this article are prepared from photographs taken by P. Frumentius Stegmiller, S.D.S., missionary in Shillong. The photographs were in part very difficult to take as they had to be made without being observed and in some cases the day was already well advanced.

by P. Dr. C. Becker, S.D.S., Apostolic Prefect of Assam.

631 About five English miles to the east of Shillong, the chief town of the Khasi Mountains, lies the town of Nongkrem. It is the seat of the king (u S'iem) who governs the state Nongkrem of Khyrim, the largest of the 25 Khasi little states and which is partly independent (semi-independent) of the English government. Nongkrem is best 796 known for the great sacrifice, simply called Nongkrem Puja or also 782 ka Pom blang-u-S'iem Nongkrem (Slaying the goat of the S'iem of Nongkrem) which takes place there annually. This festivity offers, as little else does, an instructive insight into the religious and social views and customs of this interesting mountain people and should therefore be given a concise description, which may be divided into three parts:

I. The Preparations for the Sacrificial Feast.

II. The Sacrificial Feast.

III. The Celebration that Follows.

I. The Preparations for the Sacrificial Feast

793 Just as matriarchy prevails in the family among the Khasi so a 643 similar arrangement has been kept in the management of the Khasi state, Nongkrem. In the state the S'iem is not the actual head but a high priestess, called ka S'iem sād. Sād means the divinity which watches over the royal races. The temporal government is transferred by the S'iem sād to the S'iem; he acts as her authorized agent although independent in his decisions working with his advisers, whose advice he must obtain in matters of importance. The moneys of the kingdom

are kept by the S'iem sād. Everything that comes in, such as taxes, 793
market contributions, or that which comes in through the administra- 643
tion of justice must be given to her. She may dispose of it as she sees best, while the S'iem receives from her the money necessary for paying the costs of the government.

The S'iem sād is the sole authority in matters of religion. She must watch over the religious sacrifices and determine the time and place for them; /facing p. 89? Fig. 1.÷ The Sacrifice (Nongkrem Puja) among the Khasi/ /893/ the state sacrifices are held in her house or in front of her house, and they must be performed in her presence. The actual S'iam is her son or nephew or even more distant male relative, who is chosen by the "state council," the Mentris.

After the death of the S'iem sād, this office passes to her oldest living daughter, and lacking such to the eldest daughter of her eldest daughter, and lacking such granddaughters to the oldest daughter, and so forth. In case there are no daughters or granddaughters, the oldest living sister takes the office; if there are no sisters, then the oldest daughter of the oldest sister of the mother of the deceased S'iem sād is the successor, and so it goes further. In this way the office always remains within the royal lineage.

In the house of the S'iem sād (called ka-iīng sād), which is 778
one of the largest and most attractive in the Khasi Hills, there is a 782
post in the middle which reaches from the floor to the ridge of the 796
roof. It is called u rishot Biei (post, pillar of god) and serves at the same time as the altar before which many sacrifices are performed. The pillar is nothing other than the trunk of the Khasi oak (ka dieng [824]
sning; botanical name: castanopsis sp.), which is holy to the Khasi. If the house of the S'iem sād burns down, or if it is built up anew, a new pillar must be brought. Only certain families (jaid) have the privilege of cutting down the trees for this purpose. As soon as it is cut down, dancing and music begins; the trunk is covered with a cloth and carried away on a carrying frame. Hundreds of persons participate in this. As long as the pillar is not set up, it is guarded night and day. A person or an animal might jump over it and that would be sang (=, taboo): the trunk would be defiled and another tree would have to be cut down. If something dreadful happens in the kingdom, or if a danger threatens, the S'iem sād goes with six official sacrificial priests of the kingdom Nongkrem before the post and offers sacrifice there in order to avert the evil.

The foregoing has to be mentioned in order to give a better understanding of the following. 796

The Nongkrem Puja usually takes place in the month of May. 782

÷[see category 116, p.14 --- Analyst]

782 One month before the celebration rice liquor is poured into a hollowed-
796 out gourd bottle in the house of the S'iem sād and offered before the
rishot Blei as a 'suit' (sacrifice of drink). This is done in order to in-
[769] form the u Suidnia long S'iem (the spirit of the first great-uncle on
[774] the maternal side who was the first king), the ka Blei long S'iem (the
divinity who makes kings kings) and the u Blei Shillong (the god Shil-
long), that preparations are now being made for the Puja and that
they might help with them.

776 The u Blei Shillong plays the chief part in the whole ceremony.
He enjoys great reverence among the Khasi, especially in the king-
dom Nongkrem and Nylliem. Not far from Nongkrem a mountain
[133] peak rises 6,450 feet above the sea. It is the highest peak in the
Khasi Mountains, its name is "Shillong Peak." Here is the seat of
[773] the god Shillong. The story goes that a man appeared here once,
who said he /894/ had not been born but came of himself (shu long).
He also told the people that they would receive the kings, S'iem.
So the god who lives here was called u Shu long (he who is out of him-
[103] self), from which the Europeans gradually made the word Shillong
and also gave this name to the splendid mountain station in the heart
of the Khasi Mountains.

796 After the S'iem sād has determined exactly the day of the cere-
782 monies, the news of this is sent out two weeks prior to the ceremony
to the village elders (Rangbah shnong). This is done on the day of
the large market (jēu duh), which takes place every eighth day. Two
weeks after is the pom blang, also on the day of the large market,
which is discussed below.

The way in which the invitation is issued is interesting. A num-
[211] ber of chains about an ell long are made of bamboo rings. These are
called kyrwoh. One of these is sent to the oldest man of each village.
Since the Khasi formerly had no script, this bamboo chain always
served as a sign of invitation or summons to the S'iem for ceremonies,
or of danger of war, or of court matters and such. The degree of ur-
gency was shown by the form of the links; in the case of great haste
the form was longish and flat, otherwise correspondingly rounder.
The sending of the kyrwoh to the village elders serves now as a sign
of invitation for the whole village to appear at the ceremonies and
at the same time as a demand to gather together the prescribed sacri-
[651] ficial gifts. Each of the six districts, into which the kingdom Nong-
krem is divided, must furnish a goat; each individual hut must pay a
tax (called pynshok) of one rupee and four annas in addition. Very
poor people only have to pay one anna or even only a half. The
sacrificial gifts, such as rice, various sacrificial animals, fish, brandy

and such are bought with these contributions; the balance, as with 796
other money, is handed over to the S'iem sād for management. 782

Until the approach of the actual festival, the fish sacrifice (suit-dohkha) takes places on the day called jeu pomthiah, on which all who appear are fed with dried fish and brandy. This is supposed to be a further announcement to the u Blei Shillong, u Suidnia long Siem and ka Blei long S'iem of the imminent Puja. Twelve different kinds of drums (ksing) are beaten. 796 782

Then the drum, ksing shad tyngkoh, is beaten three times, and 534
the first sacrificial priest (Soh Blei) and a flute player dance. The 535
dance, tyngkoh, will be described in more detail below. After it is finished, the ksing kynthei (women drums) have a turn, to the sound of which the S'iem and the flute player (duhalia) dance three times. Usually only women dance to this drum. About the method of dancing it is sufficient to remark that in a Khasi dance the dancing persons do not touch each other, and each carries out the motions independent of the others. After the women drums are beaten, then the sword dance drum (ksing mastieh) and the large drum (nakra) are beaten. Torches are carried around and shouts of joy uttered nine times. Various drums, flute music, and clashes of cymbals follow, while dancing takes place. /facing p. 894: (A) Fig. 2.[1] Drums, flutes and cymbals of the Khasi. Fig. 3 Sacrificial knives and ka wait of the Khasi. Phot. P. Frum. Stegmiller S. D. S. Fig. 4. Sacrificial dress of the Soh Blei (Khasi). Phot. P. Frum. Stegmiller, S. D. S. / /facing p. 894: (B) Fig. 10 (sic?). Khasi ornaments. Phot. P. Fru. Stegmiller, S. D. S. / /895/ At the end the S'iem dances alone, while the drums and flutes are not silent the whole night through. Fig. 2 shows several Khasi drums, a flute, and cymbals which are never missing from a dance.

The day of the large market, on which the actual ceremony begins, approaches meanwhile. On the day before -- ka sngi umni -- the roads are swept and the place for the sacrifice of the goat put in order. As a sign of joy as to what will happen, drums are beaten again and flutes (tangmuri) played. In front of the house of the S'iem sād, the S'iem and other men perform a sword dance. Although interesting, this dance is not very artistic. Hopping and skipping from one foot to the other, the men, one behind the other, move slowly in a circle on the open place. (cf. Fig. 6).[1] They hold a bunch of goat hair in one hand and a sword in the other. A shout of joy is uttered from time to time, then they stop again, jump at each other two by two, and hit each other with quick blows of their swords. Each one quickly draws back again and moves in a circle again as before. In this way the dance continues.

[1] [For illustrations see category 116, pp. 14–18 --- Analyst]

796 this way the dance continues.

782 After it has become dark a hen is sacrificed in front of the house of the S'iem sād: to the ka S'iem synshar (the queen who rules [176] the world) and to the Biskurom, the god who instructs in the playing of flutes and other instruments. Then various drums are beaten.

Then everyone goes inside the īing sād. The S'iem sād hands the Soh Blei, the first sacrificial priest, who is from the family (jaid) Rumnong, a hollowed-out gourd bottle (u skaw) with rice liquor. The Soh Blei pours out the contents in front of the rishot Blei in honor of the goddess of the markets (ka Blei jeu lei hat) so that the markets will be good, remunerative, and successful; so that the roads will be good and safe and everything will be blessed; so that the kingdom it- [44?] self will progress and develop. It must be remembered here that the market system is very marked among the Khasi and is the chief source of their income. After this 'suit' the same sacrificial drink is offered to the Ka Blei long S'iem, in order to receive her blessings, so that the kings will be good and may make progress. Music and dancing then lasts until daybreak.

II. The Sacrificial Feast

The actual ceremony begins on the day of the large market. This day itself is called pom blang (goat heads). The S'iem sād may not eat rice for three days, only a kind of bread, which is made from rice flour. On the large open place in front of the īing sād the men hold their sword dance (shad wait) and guns are shot off until the S'iem sād, the S'iem and the Rangbah (elders) come out of the īing sād. Following the S'iem sād, is her slave-girl (mrau), who carries the utensils and sacrificial gifts. These are arranged by the S'iem sād herself and consist of a banana leaf, of which however only the upper part is taken (ka sla kait), five betel nut leaves (tympew), five portions of betel nuts, as much as is usually put in the mouth at one time (kwai) /896/, a kind of bread made of rice flour (kpu), for which the rice is first put in water, then taken out, dried, and pounded into flour; then rynsi bread, which is also baked with pounded rice or corn, mixed with sugar and rolled into the shape of bullets; some uncooked, shelled rice (u khaw), a gourd bottle with rice liquor (u klong) and several leaves of the Khasi oak tree. The following utensils are used: a golden or silver water container (u luta), a silver dishlike plate (ka pliang rupa). All these are now given by the S'iem sād to the Soh Blei and in addition a rooster and a white he-goat are brought to the place of sacrifice.

The spectators now go to the side, the S'iem and the Rangbahs 796
come down to the place of sacrifice, while the Soh Blei receives the 782
utensils and the sacrificial gifts and spreads them out in order on the
ground. Then he takes the rooster in both hands and calls on the god
Shillong with these words; "O god Shillong, thou who hast been seated
since time immemorial! (ko Blei Shillong kumba la buh u long
shwa!)" With a deep bow he then offers the sacrifice five times.
Rooster and goat are sprinkled with water, rice, and the flour from
kpu and rynsi, and are then beheaded. Then the examination of the [787]
entrails (dykhot) takes place in order to see if the sacrifice was acceptable. The way of doing that will be given below.

After the end of the sacrifice the Soh Blei and a flute player lead [535]
the sword dance; after them the S'iem and the other dancers follow
in turn. Various drums are beaten alternately and flutes are played [534]
through the whole night. When night falls the goats of the S'iem and
those of the various districts of the kingdom of Nongkrem are brought
for the sacrifice of the next day.

The day following the great market is called ka sngi Lyngka. It 796
is the center point and climax of the whole ceremony. From early 782
in the morning the crowds pour in from all sides of the Khasi Mountains. 534

Early in the morning an unmarried girl of the royal lineage (ka 535
S'iem ba dang khynraw) dances in the house of the S'iem sād before
the rishot Blei. Usually a granddaughter or nearer relative of the S'iem
sād is chosen for this. Two men then take the girl in their arms and
carry her with a rocking motion to the large open place in front of the
iĩng sād.

Then the great folk dance begins. In the middle of the place
musicians squat on the ground and play the drums and flutes, and
strike the cymbals. The music is quite without art, only a repetition
of the same monotonous tones.

The women dancers move in a rather narrow circle around the
musicians. Only the unmarried girls dance. The clothes they wear 292
for it are very rich and frequently very valuable. Fine cloths, usually
of red, yellow, or blue silk are draped over their bodies; the upper
body and arms are covered by a satin jacket. Their hair is bound together in a bun behind their heads; a string hangs /facing p. 896. [302] 301
Fig. 5.[1/1] Khasi Men Dancers in front of the iĩng sād. Phot. P. Frum.
Stegmiller, S. D. S. Fig. 6. Sword Dance of the Khasi. Fig. 7. S'iem
sād and S'iem of Nongkrem. / /897/ down from the bun which usually
ends in three tassels. The head is covered by a golden or silver crown
of fine chased work, which is topped by a bunch of feathers or a bunch
of artificial flowers. Around their necks they wear chains of gold or

[1/1] [For illustrations, see category 116, p.16 --- Analyst]

Thus the dance continues for hours at a time amidst the noise 535 of the music. Thousands of spectators who do not seem to get tired throng around the great place. In the afternoon, at about three o'clock /898/ the dance, which plays a large part in all the religious festivities is ended.

Then preparations are made for the large sacrifice. In front of 796 the house of the S'iem sād several boards are placed in a row beside 782 each other, and in front of them at certain intervals twelve little heaps of loam are made. Music now plays inside of the iīng sād. All the sacrificial gifts are given to the S'iem sād in front of the rishot Blei and then distributed to the sacrificers by her. These then go out of the hut to the place of the sacrifice. There are twelve of them, namely the six official sacrificial priests of the kingdom and several lyngdohs from the villages; the Soh Blei is at their head, wearing a special sacrificial coat (cf. Fig. 4).[1] while the others wear everyday clothes. Each one carries a dish in his hand with some rice, pounded flour for kpu and rynsi, betel nuts and the pepper leaf that belongs with them, a small young hen, a water container, leaves of the Khasi oak tree, as well as a small gourd bottle with rice liquor. The dish and the water container of the sacrificial priests are of ornamented brass, those of the Soh Blei of silver -- all clean and polished until gleaming.

The spectators are arranged to the right and the left of the sacrificers, so that there is a wide alleyway open through the middle of the place to the gate of the board fence which surrounds the place and the iīng sād. Several men are constantly busy keeping the crowd within these bounds. No one may come in through the gate during the whole ceremony, because the god enters here during the sacrifice - therefore the broad path must be left open. If anyone should chance to wish to come in through the gate during the performance of the sacrifice, he is driven back with loud shouts. If he dared to come in [688] anyway, in earlier times he would have been a child of death; now the fear of the English government might protect him to a certain extent, although this could hardly be an absolute guaranty of his life because of the religious excitement of the people.

The twelve now squat down on the boards placed in front of the iīng sād, the Soh Blei in the middle. Behind them the S'iem sād sits alone on the steps which lead from the iīng sād to the place of the sacrifice. Somewhat further back sits the S'iem surrounded by his Mentris and relatives (cf. Fig 7).[1] The Soh Blei sets the example in all that follows; the others watch him and copy him. While each of the sacrificers slaughters only a small hen or a goat, the Soh Blei has

[1] [For illustrations, see category 116, pp 14 –18 - - - Analyst]

796 the right to kill two of them, since he sacrifices to the ka Blei long
782 S'iem and to the u Blei Shillong at the same time.

Each one places the little liquor bottle on the little pile of earth in front of him. This also represents the altar. Then they take pepper leaves and oak leaves and place them in a certain pattern beside and on top of each other; pieces of betel nuts are placed on them, and the whole is strewn with rice, kpu flour and rynsi flour, while short prayers are murmured (cf. Fig. 1). Then follows the sacrifice of the little hens. The sacrificers each take one between both hands, murmuring soft prayers, then /899/ the head of the little animal is sprinkled with water and strewn with rice, kpu flour, and rynsi flour. Each one dips a kind of pocket knife in the water and then cuts through the throat of the chicken. The freshly flowing blood is allowed to drip on the altar -- the little pile of earth with the bottle of liquor and the leaves. Then the entrails are taken out of the animals in order to see whether god is favorable to them or is angry with them because of the sins and wickedness of men. The sacrificers hold them up high with their right hands and look at them carefully. A joyful "u bha! (it is good)" escapes their lips and spreads through the circle of spectators.

This observing of entrails (dykhot) occurs at all the sacrifices.
796 Although there are many kinds of such auguries, the following are
782 more or less the usual ones. The gullet of chicken is about in the
787 middle between the neck and the stomach and shaped like a fork. The right prong is called u Blei (god), the left one u briu (man). First the rectum is looked at to see if it is empty or shows any symptoms of sickness or spots; in these cases the hen is not suitable for sacrifice. But even when everything is faultless, better signs are wanted. The forking mentioned above is looked at and the sacrificer, holding the intestines in his hand, begins the ceremony with the question: "Nga kylli nga byrthen da ka shat ka khan, ieng rangbah u briu, dem u Blei? (I ask and seek through the strewing and the oracle, does the man rise and god bow?)" With his other hand he throws a little rice on the forking of the gullet, and because of the convulsive twitching actually one part or the other does rise. If the "man" rises, it is a good sign since the opposite branching, the "god" then bows or stays still as a sign of agreement.

If the omens are unfavorable, then it must be determined by throwing /perhaps a misprint -- Einwerfen instead of Eierwerfen - egg throwing: tr. /, why the god is angry and which sacrifice would be pleasing to him. Then the sacrifice begins again until the omens
796 reveal that the god is reconciled and propitiated.

782 Let us return to our Nongkrem Puja. After the observing of the

entrails of the hens is completed with good results, the main part of 796
the ceremony begins. Goats are brought out of the inside of the īing 782
sād and one is placed behind each of the sacrificers. This moment is captured in Fig. 1. The hens that have already been sacrificed and the other sacrificial objects that have been mentioned can be seen lying in front of the Soh Blei and the other sacrificial priests on the ground. The Soh Blei now takes a long knife (ka wait) between both flat outstretched hands and squatting speaks a prayer with bowed head. Fig. 3 shows various kinds of such knives; the smaller folding ones are the ones mentioned above in describing the killing of the hens.

Meanwhile a kind of looping plant is thrown around the neck of one of the goats; one the the people present pulls it into the middle of the place where it /facing p. 898. Fig. 8. Dance of the Khasi Girls in front of the īing sād. Two photographs by P. Frum. Stegmiller, S. D. S. Fig. 9. Women Khasi Dancers. Two photographs by P. Frum. Stegmiller, S. D. S. / /900/ is held fast by a rope. The Soh Blei gets up, walks up to the animal with the ka wait in his hand and waits for the instant when it holds still. With one blow the head lies on the ground. It is at once picked up and placed beside the gourd bottle standing on the little pile of earth. The twitching rump is dragged in front of the īing sād. Thus it continues until five goats are beheaded.

Now the S'iem comes down to the sacrificial place. He takes the slaughtering knife in his hand, squats down in the place of the head priest, and observes as the latter had done the same ceremonies. Then he gets up and strides into the middle of the place in full costume with raised head and a self-conscious dignity. A goat has already been lead out there. One blow and its head also rolls on the ground. He sacrifices the first goat to the divinity which made him king; afterwards the four others are sacrificed to the u Blei Shillong. A salvo of guns and a loud shout of joy accompanies each blow of the S'iem.

The slaughter is now continued by others in endless turns. Sixty, 796
eighty and more goats must lose their lives. The poor victims are 782
not always lucky enough to be killed with one blow. The animal 787
might move at the last minute or an unskilled hand may lack a certain firmness. Then the goat is only lightly wounded and crying seeks to escape. The sacrificer throws the knife away in order to disappear hastily among the spectators; some pick up earth and throw it at him with reproachful cries, while others seize the poor animal, throw it on the ground and saw the head off with the knife. That is a horrible sight. It is considered an unfavorable sign when the goat is not

796 beheaded with one blow. If it happens to one of the first twelve goats,
782 the man concerned must inquire through new sacrifices why his sacri-
787 fice was not pleasing to god.

The observing of the entrails is only done with the twelve first goats decapitated by the S'iem and the sacrificial priests. As in the case of pigs, it is only observed whether the liver, lungs, spleen and gall bladder are healthy and without spots, in which case the sacrifice is a good one and pleasing to god; otherwise through throwing /sic: could be egg throwing = Eierwerfen/ and new sacrifices a more favorable result must be brought about.

During the night a pig is sacrificed to the honor of the u Suidnia long S'iem and he is informed thereby that Puja has now taken place and that it will take place once annually to the honor of the u Blei Shillong so that the kings will be lucky and healthy, the markets will enjoy progress and good results, and the children of the kingdom will be happy. This closes with the address to the Suidnia long S'iem: "Bring it about that the augury turns out well, and if the god Shillong should still not be satisfied, then reveal it to us through the augury."

The Soh Blei now takes a chicken in his hand, sprinkles it with water, rice, flour of kpu and rynsi and speaks: "Now thou art sprinkled in order to lose thy life by having thy neck cut so that I can see the good or the evil (La pynsum pynsleh ban duh ka mynsiem ban dykut u ryndang; ba ngan khmih ia ka bha ka sniw)." Then /901/ the animal's neck is cut, the blood, as mentioned above, is allowed to drip on the leaves and the gourd bottle, and the entrails are taken out. After the augury has turned out favorably, a white he-goat is brought in and the Soh Blei speaks: "O god Shillong, this prayer is for thee, this sacrifice of the goat, of the hen, of the kpu and rynsi, of the utensils of preparation are for thee which thou hast given the royal family so that once annually the Puja may be celebrated in thy name, so that we may live happily, be healthy and increase, so that kings will arise so that their honor and that of the kingdom will grow and increase and the children of the kingdom will spread out to increase thy name and thy honor. O god Shillong, when thou hast received the sacrifice, bring it about that the heart, the lungs, the spleen, the gall bladder and the other parts are good."

Meanwhile dancers are arranged on both sides; they swing the sword (ka wait) and the bunch (u symphiah) around in the air and utter shouts of joy. As mentioned above, the goat is now strewn three times with the various sacrificial gifts, and guns are shot off three times and shouts of joy uttered. Then the S'iem gets up, takes the off his turban (ka jain spong) and thanks god three times in a quiet voice; then he hands over the ka wait tothe Soh Blei who does the same and then gives the knife to the sacificer from the jaid Nongkseh, this one hands it on to the one from the aid Thangkieu, and this one finally gives it to the one from the jaid Jiangnong. Only one from these three families may undertake the beheading. When this has taken place, the head is placed on the leaves in front of the gourd bottle, and the entrails are taken from the body in order to read the omens. If these come out right, the dance of joy is set in motion. All members of the kingdom are invitedto the feast, which consists of rice, sacrificial meat, and rice liquor and which lasts until early in the morning. 796 782 787

III. The Celebration that Follows.

On the evening of the following day -- called mied Maulong -- a special meeting of the council takes place, which is called Dorbar sla in order to announce that all the sacifices are now past. The S'iem has mats spread out inside the house and in the front room for the people to sit on; he himself takes his place on a palong, a raised seat, in the front room. Goat meat andpork is distributed to all those present, while the person who is designated as the speaker in the Dorbar and the first of the flute players receive betel nuts. The S'iem sends to the village and has it announced three times that as long as the Dorbar lasts nobody may leave his hut. 796

Then he takes his turban off, raisesboth hands and offers thanks in the name of the lord and creator (haka kynteng u trai u nongthau), who made him king, gave him subjects as well as the districts of the kingdom, the markets and the roads leading thither and prays that he will ever give strength, growth and progress and prosperity to the fields. Then he cries /902/ out: "O god, lord and creator, give me, the S'iem, happiness and prosperity also, so that my thanks and submission to thee may become ever greater (Ah Blei, trai kynrad u nongthau u nongbuh to ai bha ai roi ia nga I S'iem ban nongkhrau ka nguh ka dem)." Then he steps back. 796 782

The one who has been made the speaker now follows from the jaid Rynjah. He thanks the S'iem three times and then says: "O lord, thou who hast created heaven and earth, thou hast seated the king that we may be children of his kingdom; thou hast given the sun and the moon for reckoning the year, so that we can have Puja once in every year, so that the King appears, the children of the valleys increase and thrive, the children of the Khasi (2), the children of the

2. That means the Khasi themselves.

796 Bhoi (3), the childrenof the War (3), so that the sacrificial gifts will

● 782

3. All various folk tribes which compose the kingdom Nongkrem.

increase before the face of thy altar (Ko trai ba thau ia ka bneng ka khyndew uba pynlong i S'iem i kynrad ba long ma ngi ki khun ki hajar kumba phi buh ka sngi ban khein ia u bnai, phi buh u bnai ban khein ka snem ban long ka puja shi sien shi snem ban im ban roi i S'iem ban roi ki khun dykhar, khun Bhoi, khun Bhoi, khun Khasi, khun War ban khrau u blang u bhet ha khmat ka duwan jong phi)."

Then the drum of joy (ksing risa) is beaten and everybody is given rice liquor, as much as he wants. The S'iem and the S'iem såd eat of the inner parts of the entrails observed the day before. Music and dancing last the whole night long until early the next morning when the participants in the festival return again to their villages and their huts.

6: Becker - 14 M-4,5 (no date) 1909 AR7 Khasi AR7

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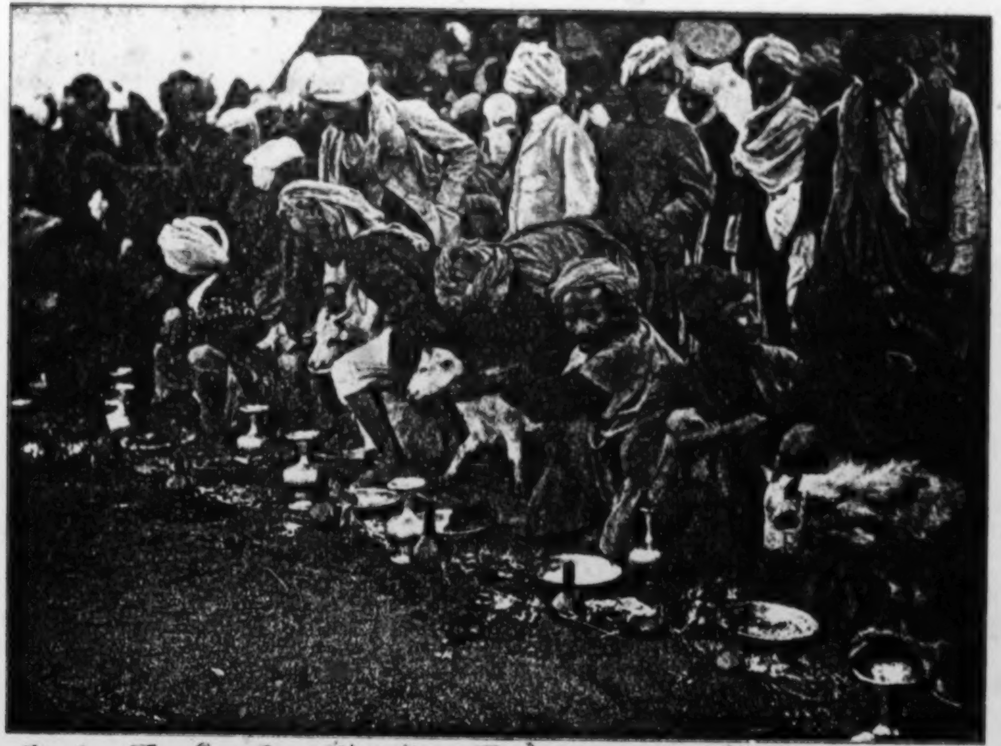

Fig. 1. The Sacrifice (Nongkrem Puja) among the Khasis

could not prevent individuals from becoming needy through misfortune 421
or laziness and their trying to rent a part of their property for an annual 425
payment or for a sum needed once. This is called ban die pan, literally: begging to buy. The sense of relinquishing by lending /133/ is contained in this. For example, a field is worth 300 reichsmarks. Fifty or 100 reichsmarks are accepted for it and the creditor remains the owner of the field until the money is repaid. This type of purchase occurs frequently. There are frequently traders (nongkhaii) who try to use such purchases to their own advantage. They turn over the field to the debtor for further cultivation in return for payment in produce of 50 to 70 per cent of the harvest. After several years the whole field is their property. Aside from this method, it also happens that instead of being able to repay the money the people need still further sums. In that case then the entire price of 300 reichsmarks is paid and the actual purchase is considered completed; that is called ban die lut; literally: totally, completely sold. A family-clan which gradually loses its property in this manner descends into poverty and
need. There is nothing else for it to do than to look for work else- [567]
where, to rent land or to sell the children as a kind of slaves to better situated people. If 40 reichsmarks are paid for a child of about 10 years, he remains in the bondage of the buyer until the money can be repaid. That happens only rarely. Besides food and the most necessary clothing only one rupee is deducted annually as wage from the purchase price thus, practically, the child belongs to the buyer for the duration of his life.

It is the duty of individual members of a family clan to work to- 613
gether so that the clan property will be maintained and will produce 688
the necessary amount for the maintenance of all. The clan mother must oversee primarily that the appropriate customs and usages are preserved. She is held in high esteem by all. To do something against her wish to offend her, to call her insulting names, or to go so far as to strike her is considered sang (taboo), a severe crime that
causes misfortune. It is a great sin (pop) and a thoroughly great dis- 613
grace (sngewsih eh tam) for the whole clan.(7) As long as a member 688 782
/134/ of the family has committed such a crime and has not begged pardon from the clan mother and the elders of the clan, perhaps with the words: pardon me, I have committed an error (to man ia nga leh

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7. Also considered similar crimes are selling clan property in secret, incest, desecrating burial places in a coarse manner, making use of holy grounds or woods.

613 bakla); and as long as the expiatory sacrifice, in the form of pigs and
698 goats, determined by the elders of the family and by the sacrificial
682 priest (lyngdoh) has not been offered, the sinning member is considered excluded from the family and the family sacrifices. But even after being accepted again a certain stain still clings to him.

But it is also the duty of the clan mother to care for the needs of
613 the members of her family clan with regard to food, clothing, and the like. She divides the fruits of the harvests according to the needs of the individual. She goes or sends to market to trade, to buy, or to sell. She takes care of the common purse and even the masculine members of the clan have to ask her for money when they wish to drink rice liquor or buy clothing. There the clan mother is generous
[662] rather than niggardly. This dependent relationship of the men is not considered unworthy at all or shameful. It is the matriarchal form and ancient custom. Nevertheless, the position of the men in the family clan is an esteemed one. Even the name they are called by has an important sound: Rangbah, Basan (oldest ones, advisers). On them falls often the work in the field and wood or the protection of the family; bow and arrow are handed to them as cradle gifts. In the more important family matters the clan mother consults with them. At the giving of the name, during a wedding, a funeral, or cremation the clan mother steps almost completely into the background, also during quarrels and court hearings before the chief (Doloi) or king (S'iem). She is still always influential with her advice, but the actual appearance, activity and judgments is the business of the men. The smaller,
● [782] everyday sacrifices she performs in the clan hut; but she can also let these /135/ be performed by her sons. At larger sacrificial ceremonies which are offered by several family clans at the same time, by whole
[793] villages or even by one of the Khasi states, only the men are active as sacrificial priests.

613 With regard to the husbands of the clan mother and of the feminin
596 members, they are not considered members of the family clan of the women at all. They are only considered the begetters. They work an live in their own clan, participate in their sacrifices and burial places. The father has no further influence in the raising of the children, who belong entirely to the clan of the mother. But usually they have no obligation, unless the wife and children are impoverished. Even then their care comes in second place after that of members of their own
[593] clan. Nevertheless the husband is honored and is addressed by "Mr." (kynrad) by his wife. She would consider it disgraceful to approach him impertinently. Where the property of a clan has been dissolved o Christian customs introduced, the husband lives and works together wi his wife and children.

his wife and children. 000

2. Holy Pieces of Land and Forest

A special kind of land property is still encountered in the Khasi and Jaintia Mountains. These are pieces of land and forests which are considered sang or kyntang, forbidden or holy, thus kyndĕu sang, khlau kyntang, forbidden fields, holy forests. They are also named in connection with the name god, for example, khlau Blei, forest of the gods, which, to a certain extent, might offer the key to their purpose and meaning. The hands of man are not supposed to disturb this kind of property; this property is sacred to the gods and at the most may be used in their service. 423 778

It is not easy to trace the origin and beginnings of these reserves. But several solutions may be found in regard to sections of land. When the /136/ Catholic mission station was founded in the village of Schella which is located on a steep mountain slope, it was hard to find a place that was halfway suitable and big enough to build even a small dwelling on it. Finally the missionary discovered such a place somewhat outside the village. But then there was a new difficulty. The place was the cremation area for the dead and therefore was sang /taboo/. The spirits of the dead would punish every intruder severely. The people were finally persuaded to burn their dead somewhere else, but it was more difficult to find any who were ready to help with the work of the building. Even those whom the missionary finally persuaded to help still suffered heavily from the fear of the punishment of the gods and continuously one or the other of them had imaginary illnesses. [771] [764] [189]

In the cases of more extensive pieces of land, the snake worshippers (thlen), who carry on their dreadful activities in the Khasi Mountains, (8) may offer an explanation sometimes. If such a person is convicted of murder, which he has committed in the service of the snake god in order to sacrifice the blood of the slain person to him, and if he wishes to free himself from the conviction, he can do nothing other than sell all his movable and immovable property. The latter thus becomes sang. Nobody would dare to take over the fields and gardens, to plant anything there, or to touch any fruit on that property. Thus in Cherrapunji a native Catholic was able to take 423 784 [776] [781]

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8. Im Stromtal des Brahmaputra, /In the River Valley of the Brahmaputra/, pp. 76ff.

etc. The targets are of two kinds, i.e., a *skum*, which is made of a bundle of grass about 1 foot long and 4 inches in diameter, the target being fastened on to a pole; and from the root of a plant called *sohpdong*. The distance for the shooting is about 30 to 40 yards. 526

Before the shooting begins, a *nongkñia*, or sacrificer, performs a *puja* and then the shooting commences. Each archer subscribes from half to one anna, the total amount so obtained is pooled and then wagered against a similar sum subscribed by the other side. Whilst the shooting is going on the men of both sides dance and sing, and when there is a hit a great shout, or *kynhoi*, is raised. The side that wins the match, after rewarding the *nongkñia* and the man who makes the targets, buys a pig, and some liquor, which articles are partaken of by the people of the village which has won the match. In the War villages, and amongst the Syntengs, sometimes wagers of considerable sums are made in lump sums in these contests.

11. It is not intended to describe at great length the Khasi religious system, but only to note briefly regarding it at present, a full account being reserved for the monograph for the preparation of which I am collecting further information. Khasi religion is animism, or spirit worship. It may be divided into (*a*) the worship of spirits, (*b*) ancestor worship. 771

(*a*) *Spirit worship.*—The principal god amongst the Khasis is God the Creator (*U'lei Nongthaw*), who is sometimes masculine and sometimes feminine, the use of the feminine gender being no doubt due to matriarchal influence. A yearly sacrifice should be offered to this god of a cock and a goat. The cock is sacrificed as a substitute for man, it being thought that the cock, when killed, bears the sins of the man, and that by its sacrifice man will obtain redemption. How the cock came to occupy this important position in Khasi religion is not at present quite clear. Perhaps there were originally human sacrifices amongst the Khasis, and the cock nowadays takes the place of the human victim. Other gods which are worshipped are *Ka'lei long kur* (the goddess of the clan), *Ka'lei longspah* (the goddess of wealth), *U'lei um tong* (god of water). An important fact to be noted is that the Khasi gods or goddesses are never worshipped in the shape of idols in any form whatsoever. 776 782

(*b*) *Ancestor worship.*—I am inclined to think that this form of worship largely underlies the Khasi religious system. The following are some of the ancestors or ancestresses who are regularly worshipped:— 769

(1) *Ka Iawbei tymmen,*—the primeval ancestress of the family. A pig is sacrificed to her. [602]

Stone No. 3 : the middle is called *U Maw Kni*, i.e., the stone of 769
the maternal uncle, Nos. 2 and 4 are called *Ki pyrsa, Ki paru*, i.e., the 764
brothers or sisters, and the nephews or nieces. No. 1 is called *U Maw* 211
Ksing, i.e., the stone of the drum, and No. 5 *U Maw kait*, the stone of the plantain. No. 6 is called *Ka Iawbei tynrai*. The word *tynrai* meaning root, *Ka Iawbei tynrai* signifies the first maternal grandmother of the family. The above is the system of naming stones in Maosbai Raj—other systems will be described in the monograph.

Class (*b*).—Stones of this class are generally, I am informed, three in number, consisting of three upright stones as shown in plate IV and a flat stone in front, as in the case of stones falling under class (*a*) :

Here there is a marked difference in that the big stone in the middle is called *U Maw thawlang*, or the stone of the generator or father. Nos. 1 and 3 are the brothers or the male cousins of the father, and No. 4 is erected in honour of *Ka Iawbei*, or the grandmother of the father, —not the first ancestress of the clan, as in the case in stones falling under class (*a*). The post split at its top containing the jawbone of [782]
a bullock which has been sacrificed in honour of the deceased parent should be observed, *vide Fig.* B. It was formerly the custom and is still in some places the custom, to spread offerings upon the flat stones to appease the spirits of the deceased ancestors. These stones, which are only 2 to 3 feet from the ground, suggest the idea of sacrificial tables at some time or other. Stones 3, 4, and 5 in *Fig.* A are between 9 and 10 feet high, but there are several larger *menhirs* in these hills.

The description of the stones in figures A and B was given me by a man of some intelligence at Nongkrem, but many different explanations of the names, and regarding the significance of these stones, are given by other persons living in various parts of the hills, and it is not unlikely that the account I have tentatively advanced may have to be modified subsequently. The system of each clan, apparently, varies to some extent from the other, and in some cases to a very considerable degree. In the Jaintia Hills very large groups of stones are found near villages, which are thought by the Syntengs to have been merely erected by the sides of roads as *Maw-shong-thait*, or seats for weary travellers, or for persons attending markets. At one place in the Jaintia Hills memorial stones were erected to commemorate a woman, *Ka Kumpatsaw*, who in generations past is said to have had thirty husbands. It may, however, be stated that no such polyandrous custom has been found at the present day. The stones are reported to be thirty in number. There are also many stones at a place on the road from Shillong to Jowai said to have been erected to commemorate those who fell in a battle between the Syntengs and one of the Khasi Siems.

cover what their ancestors are doing for them, and what their 764
views and inclinations may be as regards the amount of aid they 769
may give. To a Khasia there is no difficulty about the matter; 211
when in distress or requiring aid of any kind, seeking omens by [782] ●
the breaking of eggs (which I will hereafter describe) he appeals to and propitiates any one ancestor he may select; only one or two may promise such protection, and these it may so happen have died years ago. The benefit also conferred may be very trivial, and sufficiently acknowledged by the setting up of stones of small size; on the contrary, if great favours are conferred on the wealthy we find large monoliths forming conspicuous landmarks on many a hill-top, scattered over a large area of country, and which are mostly known to the country round by the name of the individuals who have wrought so much good in their after state.

These stones are never erected in pairs or in even numbers; in 801
counting over a very large series still perfect, I found them in- 211
variably in sets of three, five, seven, or, as I have before men- 764
tioned in the case of the Nongtariang clan, in two sets, five and five, on opposite sites, to the same individual.* Even numbers are considered unfinished or imperfect.

A reference to the plans given, numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, will show the various arrangements in which the stones are set up, both in a segment of a circle and at right angles to each other, as in fig. 3.1/ The most common form, however, is in line, fig. 4. Fig. 1 consisted of a circular platform raised about two feet, faced with rough stones on the front face. These three examples were observed on the hill of Lailang-kote, where the bazar is held, and I have not seen anywhere else the monoliths so arranged; in other parts of the country they are invariably set up in a straight row.

These monuments are also erected for such a reason as the 764
following:—During the illness of a person, every kind of propi- 211
tiation and exorcism either by the breaking of eggs, sacrifice of [782]
fowls, pigs, etc., and by the examination of the liver and viscera,
having been made, and then failing to restore him; the sick [787]
man may vow that should he recover, he will erect a set of stones to one of his ancestors, who, it is presumed, on knowing of the intention, will do his best to save him.

In setting up these slabs all members of the community are 764
under an obligation to assist on such an occasion, and are not 211
paid for their labour, beyond receiving in the evening a little 476
food or liquor at the dwelling of the family who have sought the aid. The skilled workmen employed on the stone-cutting are,

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* Three and five are the most frequent numbers met with, nine very rare I have seen eleven.

1/ [See end charts 1-4, category 116 -- Analyst]

764 all mingle together again in one large family without trouble or 775 suffering. The idea of a member of a family being a wanderer in the other world, cut off from, and unable to join the circle of the spirits of his own clan, is most repugnant to the feelings of a Khasi or Sinteng. Thus we find every attempt is made on the death of a man in a distant village or district to lead his spirit back with his calcined bones to his native place. For instance, should he die alone on a trading expedition into North Cachar and be buried by a tribe of some other denomination, some relation, if he can afford it, will proceed to disinter and burn the remains; such will be done years after when accident may take some relative near the place. Of this I had an interesting example in my own camp when marching from the Khasi Hills to Asālu.* While encamped at Thangnansip in North Cachar, one of my coolies (porters) came one morning and asked leave for the day for himself and some of his fellows; on asking why they wanted it at such an unusual time, when we were in the field and moving camp, he said that a relation had died in that village while on a trading speculation with dried fish and salt towards Asālu from Jawai. It appeared that the man, having got an attack of fever, had been left behind by his companions, in the hope that he would get round in a few days and then follow them; he, however, eventually died, and was buried by the Kūkis of "Kabúr." My men had with some difficulty discovered the grave (for many years had elapsed), the site of Kabúr had been changed in the interim, as is the custom of the Kukis, who seldom remain more than four years tilling the same ground, frequently not more than three, known in that part of India as "Joom cultivation"; high grass covered the old village site; the Khasia coolies, however, disinterred the remains, burnt them, and the residue was carefully preserved and sent back to Jawai, the man's native place, to be interred with the bones of his family.

When carrying the remains to the home of the deceased, not only is the greatest care bestowed on them, but the spirit is carefully considered and led onward, to prevent the possibility, as they suppose, of its wandering off the route. Leaves are occasionally plucked, and with three or four grains of rice placed on them, are deposited by the wayside as offerings. On reaching
[782] a river this is done on the bank, and sometimes when such a river is large and the abode of some powerful demon, a fowl is let loose in the jungle as an offering to the titular spirit of the stream. A most curious custom exists connected with this transporting of the soul which I have seen on several occasions. The dead, they say, have not the strength or ability to wade

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* In Crawfurd's embassy to Siam, we find that a similar idea prevails in that country (see Appendix C).

through water, and if they trust themselves to it would be carried 764 down the stream, never to be recovered. They, therefore, stretch 775 a thread of cotton from one bank to the other, and if the breadth is great this is kept clear of the water by sticks planted in the bed of the river, and notched at the top to receive it. If the running water should be very narrow merely a stick is laid, or even a stalk of grass is considered sufficient to form a bridge for the dead man's soul. The line of thread is called the "string bridge."

On passing through some dense dark wood where it is pre- 764 sumed a demon may be, they think it not improbable that he 782 may be detaining them or throwing impediments in the way, and should any of the party fall sick such is to them clearly indicated. The breaking of eggs is resorted to, or a pendulum is made by tying a stone, knife, or generally the brass box in which they keep the lime that is mixed with the betal and pan leaves, and the rite so well described by Hodgson (Appendix A)[1] is gone through. The similarity of the Bodo or Mech custom shows how general these superstitious customs are among the tribes in this quarter. The only difference being that with the Khasi, the weight is caused to revolve in a circle should any spirit require to be propitiated, and that it should cease to revolve when the offering, either a fowl or a pig, is considered to have been accepted.

Should a Khasia lose his life in such a way that his body can- 766 not be recovered, say by being drowned in one of the large rivers in the plains, his relations assemble on some prominent hill or rock overlooking the low country. One of the members taking some kowries (small shells used as money, Cypræa) in his hand, and, looking towards the site of the accident, shouts out the name of the deceased and calls on him to return; his spirit having been supposed to do so, they proceed to burn the cowries, which are symbolical of his bones, and any clothes of the deceased they may possess. The ashes of the cowries are then placed in the bone depository.

The corpse is kept in the house four or five days, occasionally [764] longer.* In the case of chiefs of tribes, men of consequence and wealth, the body after death is preserved in honey, and kept in this way in its coffin for a very considerable period; the platform on which the body is burnt is erected during the times, and considerable expense is entailed on its construction, in cutting the stones, as well as on the expenditure of gunpowder; throughout the day explosions may be heard at irregular intervals from different quarters, now at one side, then at another to drive away

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* The excessive and continuous rainfall of the Khasi Hills is not the reason why the dead are preserved in honey; it would be impossible to procure it in sufficient quantity for such a purpose. *Vide* M. Schlagintweit's paper in the "Ausland", where this is stated.

[1] [see category 116, p. 137— Analyst]

holds his own, he can reply: What was the good of calling me 787
in, to seek signs from eggs, when the man was past hope? I could only give you such, and say he was sure to recover.—As might be expected, the sacrificers prey on the ignorance and superstitions of the people; and it not unfrequently happens, I am told, that on one being called in, and after smashing a number of eggs, he declares that owing to previous communion with spirits in other houses, he can do nothing, and recommends that another exorcist be called in, to kill a pig or a fowl, and thus those who can afford it are made to give up as much as can be squeezed out of them.

Any member of the community, if he desires it, can learn the forms of offering, sacrifice, etc., under the instruction of those who are in the profession, and who can thus sanction and look to their due and proper performance. When they sacrifice a cow, goat, or pig, the liver is the principal part examined for omens; if it is smooth and healthy, such are good. The entrails, if full, are a propitious token; the size of the gall-bladder is another point—if small, poverty may fall on the family. Demons also are particular; some will not accept a black or coloured fowl; pure white only will suffice, and these they object often to sell.

It is often a matter of great difficulty to persuade a Khasia to 758
take medicine, especially men from outlying villages; they quite dread it, imagining that, should they take it, some spirit, wroth at not being propitiated, may alter its properties, and thus make them much worse. I have seen a grown-up man burst into tears, and beg that medicine might not be administered, when he was lying seriously ill. They, however soon find out the good effects of our treatment, especially that of quinine in fever, and they laugh in turn at the scruples of their more ignorant companions.

The Jaintias, or, more properly, the Sintengs, on the East, are, 787
I think, more under the influence of their exorcists than are the 782
Khasis, on the West. On certain occasions, individuals sacrifice a number of animals to different demons, and a great feast is held, to which numbers are invited; men, women, and children, are then arranged in large circles, each with a leaf for a plate before them, on which the meat, when dressed, is served.

There is, however, one very extraordinary custom—one, I am 754
glad to say, confined to only a few villages in the Jaintia country—called "Tarroo". The unfortunate individual who is presumed to be in league with a demon, in order to clear his character and be again admitted into the society of his kinsfolk, must throw everything he possesses away, even to the clothes on his body, and begin life anew. A man on whom such an accusa-

is seen by the inmates, and quite as soon by the neighbours, who 753
collect to revile and jeer the unfortunate individual; his relations 754
leave him; his wife, if he has one, retires to her parent's or sister's home, and in no other way can he recover his position in society save by throwing away all he possesses; cash and clothes are scattered on the road as he goes out of the village, and are picked up by those who follow; his house, I was told, is also demolished, and the thatch roof carried out and burnt in the outskirts of the place.

This paper has become much longer than I had anticipated, 000
and I fear will exhaust the interest that there may be in it. I had intended alluding to the Kūkis, Mikirs, Garos, etc., and exhibiting drawings of their burial-grounds, but this I think may be best postponed and introduced with some notes on the extension of those tribes and the people of the northern slopes of the Khasi range of hills, if this Society should think such of sufficient interest to them. I trust also that Captain Williamson, Deputy-Commissioner of the Garo Hills, now on leave in England, will give us the benefit of the valuable information I know he has obtained regarding the manners and customs of the Garo tribes, among whom he has mixed so much and so intimately.

APPENDIX A

Paper on the Origin, Location, etc., of the Bodo, Kocch, Dhimāl [113]
People, by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1849.
Vol. xviii, pt. ii, p. 728.—"Thirteen leaves, each with a few grains of 782
rice upon it, are placed by the exorcist in the segment of a circle before him, to represent the deities. The Ojha squatting on his hams before the leaves causes a pendulum attached to his thumb by a string to vibrate before them, repeating invocations the while. The god who has possessed the sick man is indicated by the exclusive vibration of the pendulum towards his representative leaf, which is then taken apart, and the god in question is asked what sacrifice he requires?—a buffalo, a hog, a fowl, or a duck to spare the sufferer (the Ojha best know how?) a hog, and it is forthwith vowed by the sick man and promised by the exorcist, but only paid when the former has recovered. On recovery the animal is sacrificed, and its *blood* offered to the offending deity."

APPENDIX B.

Calcutta Review, 1854, p. 128. Paper by the Rev. J. Pryse.— [113]
"The universal desire to immortalise the memory of their dead ancestors on earth by the erection of stone monuments, may be deemed as a faint indication of an expectation of some kind of future existence. The sacrifice for their dead, which they call 'Suid-iap', or "Ksuid-iap', that is, the ghost or demon of the dead, may be considered indicative of the same notion. The professed intention of the sacrifice is to pacify the

782 spirit of the dead, so that it may come in the capacity of a 'Ksuid', or demon, to cause pain and calamity to the family. This sacrifice is frequently repeated after a person's death, if his bones were deposited in a small repository; but if they are placed in a large one, the fear of his injuring the family is not so great, and the sacrifice is not so frequent, because 'la buh ka niam ka rukum', the religion and customs were observed regarding him."

Extract from the Rev. J. Pryse's Paper, p. 130.—"The reader is desired to observe that this form is always pronounced, when the person on pronouncing it is in the act of offering his thankofferings; hence it was thought necessary to give a few explanations of the movements of the speaker."

"*Thank Offering to Secure the Protection of the Goddess.*"

(The Khasia words are, "Ka jing-nguh pynskem ia ka blei"; the offering is made in order to secure the kind offices of the goddess in the future, rather than to acknowledge past kindness.)

"Attend, O Goddess, that thou mayest protect us all as a family,[*] that we may increase and prosper. O Goddess, we are now about to sacrifice a large cock, and a large horned goat, also a plaintain leaf, flour, baked rice, a heart, and a twig. Do thou, O Goddess, attend to us. I put up and cause to stand the offering for the purpose of appeasing thee, O Goddess.[†] O thou family-builder, I remove and drive away thirty demons, nine demons,[‡] and Ka Tyrút Ka Smer,[§] that I may prepare and set aright the intestines, that I may cut the throat of the cock, and sprinkle the blood upon the twig.[||] Away, thou Ka Tyrút ka Smer! I sweep away and remove thee, that I may open a clear road for the purpose of inquiring concerning the good and the evil. Thus it is proper that I should sacrifice a large horned goat. Attend thou, O Goddess, whilst I offer to thee a member and the backbone after I shall have laid it bare and made it ready.[¶] Attend thou, whilst I observe and keep the rules and customs, and whilst I offer to thee a sacrifice in order that thou mayest give us

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[*] "All as a family", "baroh shi kur", "ka kur", is generally used among the Khasis to signify all those who are related by blood.

[†] Whilst saying these words, the officer prepares the place, and causes the goat, etc., to stand by the place. (See Lev. xvi, 7.)

[‡] The offerer, whilst saying this, throws some rice on the ground to pacify the evil spirits, and drive them away, lest they should desecrate the sacrifice and ceremonies. "Laipen ksuid kyndai ksuid"—here neither thirty nor nine should be regarded as the exact number, but both signify any number indefinitely great; much in like manner as the number one thousand was regarded by the Jews, and as that number is occasionally used in Scripture. The phrase, "kyndai ksuid", nine demons, seems to be an old phraseology, the exact meaning of which is not known at present; but "laipen ksuid", thirty demons, is the common phrase in use to signify an indefinitely great number—it means *all*.

[§] The name of one of the most powerful and malignant demons.

[||] Whilst speaking thus, the offerer kills the cock, and sprinkles the blood as described above.

[¶] The offerer's hands are busily employed in preparing his sacrifice whilst he utters the above speech.

health, that we may increase and prosper, that we may walk securely, 782
that we may enjoy our possession in security, that we may carefully ameliorate our families, that we may increase in number. Do thou embrace us, do thou confide in us, do thou support us whilst we observe the rules and customs, that we may become numerous, that we may offer thee sacrifices. Come thou and receive us, receive us at thy feet, that we may spread out on the right and on the left. Come, confide in us; come, support us; come, envelope our spirits with thy power.*

This sacrifice is generally made by a whole Kúr or family *all related* by blood.

APPENDIX C.

Crawfurd's "Embassy to Siam", p. 19.—"Under ordinary circumstances so much importance is attached to the rite of burning the dead, that if the ceremony cannot be performed soon after death, either from poverty, or from the party dying at a distance, the body is first buried, and afterwards, as soon as convenient or practicable, disinterred and consigned to the funeral pile. Of persons of distinction, a few of the bones are kept, and either preserved in urns in the houses of their relations, or buried, with little pyramidal monuments over them, in the ground adjacent to the temples. Of these monuments we saw a good number: they are small and paltry, without any inscription. 764 211

APPENDIX D.

W. Griffith's "Journals", p. 75.—"Close to the village are the burying-places of two Singphos. These have the usual structure of the cemeteries of the tribe, the graves being covered by a high conical thatched roof. I find, from Bayfield, that they first dry their dead, preserving them in odd-shaped coffins until the drying process is completed; they then burn the body, afterwards collecting the ashes, which are finally deposited in the mounds over which the conical sheds are erected," etc., etc. 764

APPENDIX E.

Burning the Dead, etc.—"The practice of preserving dead bodies in honey has not arisen, as M. Schlagintweit states, from the extremely wet season experienced at Cherra. Bodies are burnt throughout the rains, as I have witnessed. Men of rank or wealth are treated in the above way, and are often kept thus preserved during the whole of the dry cold weather, and not burnt until a propitious time has been selected. The custom, no doubt, has been derived from its Eastern source."

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* Mr. Pryse remarks: "However devoid of sense or puerile the traditional and unwritten literature of the Khasis may be considered, the writer is not sure that he is able to elicit much more sense from many parts of the much talked of literature of the Vedas and Puranas of the Hindu sages," and he offers a specimen from the Sanhita.

587 of the woman by her husband. No occasion arises either of
421 taking his place on death, by his brother or by sister's son; or of a sister of a deceased wife being made over to a man, as is the custom among Garos, where the husband of the heiress manages the property of his wife. Among the Khasis, the widow or widower cannot normally remarry before the end of a year after the death of the husband or wife. When a year is over, a payment is made to the Kur of the deceased to remove
587 the disability. If the man or woman want to remarry before
782 the year is out, a larger sum is paid. In Mawphlang, a sum of Rs. 5-4-0 is paid at the end of the year and Rs. 11-4-0 for untimely remarriage (within the year). The payment is made to the Ka Khadduh of the deceased in each case, and a ceremony severing the relation with the dead spouse is performed. A pig is purchased with the money and it is sacrificed in the house of the Ka Khadduh by a man—usually a neighbour. If the deceased was a man, the following invocation is made:
[539] "Ha kane ka mied la shim nong sang bad knia nong sang ia phi. Ka tnga uta uta ban ia khuid."

Free translation:—

"On this night the tabooed person is sacrificing to you. The wife of so-and-so (naming the man) is hereby made pure."

The pig is then killed by thrusting an iron spike through the shoulder. It is then cooked and eaten by the people present. This mode of killing is known as "dung."

The myntri Orongsing, whose genealogy has been noted, remarried a year after the death of his first wife Ka Resimai. This woman died two years ago, and the ceremony for removing the bar on remarriage was performed only last year. The money was made over to an old man U Ru, who is well acquainted with the rites. He purchased a pig and killed it by the "dung" method in the compound of Ka Resimai's mother, Ka Sheribon. The spike might be of wood or iron, stated U Itchon. I was informed by the myntri U Subu Rai that the ceremony of

removal of the bar on remarriage was also of the same kind 587
elsewhere in the neighbouring States. Clearly, the idea of 782 ●
leviration or sororation is incompatible with this idea of the
marriage bond continuing even after death and necessitating a
ceremony to break it. It may also be noted that while the 597
Khasis permit divorce somewhat easily, remarriage is not permitted [586]
of either party "within the family of the divorced
husband or wife" (G). A Khasi cannot also marry two sisters,
although he can marry irregularly, more than one woman and
also the wife's sister after the decease of the wife. We can now 601
discuss why a woman or a man refers to the brothers and sisters 835
of the husband or wife by the kinship terms used by the spouse,
qualified by a special term. When a man marries and goes
to live in the house of his wife's mother, he comes in contact
with unmarried sisters of the wife. But he knows that they are
sexually to be avoided. He lives in the wife's mother's house
only during the life time of his wife. A wife's sister is comparable
to a Kur sister sexually, during this period.

But his economic relations and religious ties require that a 601
distinction should be made between these "sisters" and the 607
"Kur sisters." The qualifying term supplies this requirement. The woman, on the other hand, has no direct relations with her husband's brothers. She has however to keep in touch with the husband's female relatives. The bones of the husband go over to the mother's house and eventually to the clan ossuary. The husband is also a potential manager of the property of his female relatives. She has therefore to take note of the order in age of her husband's sisters. As her husband uses the terms for sisters for the sisters-in-law, it is quite natural for her to extend such usage to her husband's sisters. The brothers of the husband do not count at all so far as the woman is concerned, and she will not therefore have any special term for them. As the sisters are referred to as Para Kynsi and Hymmen Kynsi, so will the brothers of the husband be referred to by similar terms. The absence of any sexual privileges between the woman and her

household deities, and measles and smallpox deities. 776
Deities of the first two categories are simply aspects
of the high God or Goddess. ● The earth is peopled 771
with two great orders of land demons and
water demons who cause all undesirable, unnatural,
and otherwise inexplicable events, acting either on
their own or as instruments in the hands of sorcerers.
Apart from omens, both in nature and in dreams, 787
Khasis attach supernatural significance also to mystic 822
numbers, and to the colors white, black, and red.
They hold especially important folk beliefs regarding 824
betel nut, paddy rice, gold and silver, and clothing.
Practitioners. The two classes of religious practitioners 791
are the village or state priests and the sacrificers.
Both are male. They use the same divinatory techniques 793
of reading broken eggshells and the entrails 754
of cocks, and they both sacrifice cocks, hens, goats,
pigs, and cattle. Their skills are not taught to them
so much as picked up by observation and confirmed
by demonstrations of efficacy. A priest is elected
from among the men of his sib to direct his skills to
the public good until he dies, and his rewards are
institutionalized and come from the village or the
state. A sacrificer acts for private persons or kin
groups, on call, and is rewarded by them personally
with gifts in cash or in kind. The sacrificer is called
upon to explain and then to ritually remedy every
variety of misfortune, especially illness, though his
powers are nowadays regarded with ambivalence,
and he is widely expected to become a sorcerer
sooner or later. ● There are two major types of sorcerer. 754
One is the ritual specialist or sacrificer who
secretly turns his skills from good to evil, manipulating
demons to injure a person or kin group, and
acting always for himself alone out of considerations
of jealousy or revenge. The other is normally a leading
citizen, a woman who is so wealthy and successful
that it is believed that she must keep a *thlen*, i.e.
a creature which will bring her prosperity as long as
she feeds it periodically with human blood. To provide
this blood, the men of her household, or other
males whom she bewitches with a special whisky,
will indiscriminately murder anyone except a member
of her matrilineage. The Jaintias have an analogue [184]
to the *thlen* in their *taro*, except that the
ultimate result is death from illness rather than
murder. Minor witchcraft can be perpetrated by
poison keepers or persons with an evil eye, who are
often women. **Ceremonies.** The important traditional 843
ceremonies were the life-crisis rituals relating to 844
pregnancy and childbirth, the naming of a child, and 553
death. Lesser ceremonies related to marriage and 764
divorce, and to housebuilding. All these rituals were 585
addressed primarily to the ancestors, and they are 586
still performed in modified form by many Khasis. 342
Other rituals, which were performed by groups such 769
as villages, sibs, local descent groups, or households, 178
were addressed to the unnamed aspects of the high 782 ●

God or Goddess, deities regarded as helpful in bringing 782 ●
prosperity, producing fertility, and so on. Rituals
of this kind are no longer practiced, except for the [178]
Bedingkhlam ceremony designed to protect the Jaintia
village of Jowai. Finally, the state religion of 796
many chiefdoms was expressed in one great ceremony
per year which was intended to secure ancestral 178
blessing for a chief and his lineage, and, through this,
for the entire chiefdom. The notable example, still
practiced, is the Pomblang Syiem of Khyrim chiefdom.
[Cf. Lyngdoh 1937; 1946; Stegmiller 1924b; [113]
Becker 1909.] **Illness and medicine.** In time of illness,
a Khasi calls in a sacrificer, and possibly also [975]
a medicine man. The medicine man is an ordinary
individual who has hit upon some herbal remedy for
one or more ailments, who has become famous
enough to be sought out and rewarded in cash, and
who jealously guards the formula of his medicine
until it dies with him. He and his patients tend to
regard him as specially blessed. **Soul, death, and** 775
afterlife. The universe is comprised of a heaven, the
earth, and the air between. Heaven is where the [472]
souls of deceased mortals live in eternal peace,
grouped sib by sib. The earth and all nature were
created by God, and everything that God created
has its own individual soul. There is no other great
earth deity, for it was God who created the earth.
The air is inhabited by the wandering souls of those
dead for whom full death rites were not performed.
A Khasi's potentiality for enjoying an afterlife in 764
heaven with his ancestors depends on his receiving 765
proper death rites at the hands of his sib mates. First,
his body is cremated by his children, notably his
youngest daughter, and his bones are collected and
deposited temporarily in a small stone receptacle.
All work stops in the village while everyone participates
in the funeral. Once every several years, an
entire sib gathers to witness the transfer of the bones
of recently deceased sib mates from their temporary
receptacles to the great sib cairn that is in the keeping
of the youngest daughter, descended from the
sib ancestress through a line of youngest daughters.
This final ceremony covers five days, and is elaborate
and expensive, but when an individual's bones are
finally resting with those of his antecedents in the
cairn, it is understood that his soul is finally in
heaven, "eating betel nut in the house of God."

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Aitchison 1931; Bareh 1962; Becker 1909, 1924; Bhuyan 1949; C., W. 1832; Cantlie 1934; Chatterji 1953; Chattopadhyay 1941; Costa 1936, 1937, 1958, 1960; Darrah 1896; Ehrenfels 1950, 1953, 1955; Gait 1926; Gatphoh 1947; Grierson 1903-28; Gurdon 1907; Hooker 1891; India (Republic) 1952-57; Lyngdoh 1937, 1946, 1952; Mills n.d.; Morris 1910; Mukherjee et al. 1941; Pugh 1951; Rabel 1961; Rafy 1920; Ropmay 1940; Roy 1897; Roy 1914; Shakespear 1914; Singh 1950; Stegmiller 1924a, 1924b, 1925. 113

778 objects are stored while that of the west (kynram blang) was meant exclusively
796 for sacrificial goats. There is a very big circular courtyard in front of the
building where the members of the royal family as also other boys and spinsters
[793] hold a ritual dance. The function is always held during the moonlit period of
May or June and the actual dates are fixed in consultation with the Chief priest
[443] (*Sohblei*) in such a way that the first day—*Pamtiah** always coincides with the
market day of Shillong Chota Bazar. The dates of the festival is then communicated
[202] to the in-charge of different units of his territory, through a
wooden stick '*kyrwoh*' having a few knots of cane-strips, as a form of summons
for attending the festival for five days at Smit along with subjects under their
jurisdiction.

IMPORTANT PARTICIPANT

796 The responsibility of performing this ritual rests on the High-priestess
793 (*Ka Siem Sad*) who is succeeded by her eldest daughter. Different ritual objects
562 are procured by her, well in advance and it is obligatory on her part to
join the ceremonial dancing, in which her daughter may also officiate on her
[769] behalf. U Shillong is worshipped by the chief priest while the other ancestors
are invoked by lesser priests. The musicians (*Dhulia*) besides their normal
[533] duties, take part in the worship of the ancestors and they are presented with
silk turban, jacket, cloth, by the ruling family for the services rendered during
the festival. The *Siem* has no especial role except to supervise and evoke U
Shillong for the welfare of the community. He is required to perform certain
sacrifices, failing which his heir-apparent (*Siem kynnah*) does the same. He
along with his sister (High priestess) abstain from taking rice during the period
of celebration presumably to observe the sanctity of this festival as also to
ensure the successful conclusion of the function.

RITUAL MATERIALS

796 The festival derives its name from the sacrifice of a large number of goats
782 some of which were supplied from the State fund and from different units of
the territory. Formerly at least fifty goats were required and each unit had
231 a specific allotment but owing to the economic difficulty that the Khasi are
experiencing, the number of goats sacrificed hardly exceeds twenty-five. The
goats collected from the different units, are presented to the Chief at the midnight
[273] of the third day. Rice-beer, dried fish, fermented-rice, betel leaves together
[276] with nuts are also important ritual objects in this celebration.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FESTIVAL

The commencement of the festival was marked by the distribution of dried,
796 fish (suit dokha) to the persons assembled on the occasion, in the evening of
782 *Pamtiah* (*i.e.* 21st June, 1957). This was followed by the dropping of rice-beer
by the Chief priest over the fire place of central hall known as *Ka suit-ka shor*

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[805] *A week consists of eight days in Khasi Calender the names are according to the places where markets are held in Khasi Hills.

	Name	Market
1.	Pamtiah	Shillong Chota Bazar.
2.	Umni	Cherrapunji.
3.	Yew-duh	Shillong Burra Bazar.
4.	Lyngka	Barapani.
5.	Nongkrem	Nongkrem.
6.	Mawlong	Laban (Shillong).
7.	Rynghep	Cherrapunji Chota Bazar.
8.	Shillong	Laitlyng kot.

17: Banerjee E-5 (1955) 1962 AR7 Khasi AR7
Smit

in which no sacrifice was made except this libation of this liquor in the name of 796
U Shillong, Ka Blei Long Siem and U Suidnia. Subsequently, the Chief 782
musician (Dhulia) worshipped another deity Ka Synchar, by holding a yellow cook in front of ritual offerings collected on a plantain leaf while his subordinates immediately shouted nine times in their traditional way. Redistribution of dry-fish and indigenous liquor to the people marked and the end of the first day and the ceremonies performed on this day were repeated on the second day (Umni).

The sacrifice of goats which was an important feature of the festival, was performed in the afternoon of the third day (Yew duh) on the top of an adjacent hill where the *Siem* along with other members of his house, went there in a procession. The people shouted all the time while it was preceeding to that place. The musicians went round the altar first at the top of the hill thrice in anticipation of a happy and good auguers. The Chief priest facing the north, prayed to U Shillong holding a red-coloured cock in his right hand and killed it on the altar collecting its blood in a gourd vessel. The entrails of the cock were carefully examined by him and then kept on a silver plate. The Chief priest threw some grains of rice before him as also over the yellow goat and prayed to U Shillong holding a *dah* in his hand. He then passed on this implement to the *Siem* who also prayed to the deity. The *Siem* handed over the same to a man (nengnong) who sacrificed the goat on behalf of the *Siem*. He collected nine pieces of meat from different parts of the goats body (*e.g.* heart, lungs, liver, stomach, kidney, etc.) and handed them over to the priest. The latter cut each piece of the meat into five parts and offered them to the five ancestors.* The procession returned to the Siem's residence when the head of the goat was brought back by a member of a Kharbamen clan. It was then given to the High-priestess for disposal of the same in a manner as she liked. The day's rituals were completed by performing the goat presentation ceremony in the midnight. The Chief musician stood very near the fire made in this occasion at the verhandah (tyngkong) of the building and called the names of different units to present their gifts, in order of their seniority. The gathering that was watching from the courtyard shouted in their traditional way three times on receipt of the *Siem's* acceptance and the animals were led to the *kynram-blang* for overnight stay before which they were not considered fit to be sacrificed to be held on the day next.

On the evening of the fourth day (Lyngka) betel leaves and nuts were presented to the members of the *Siem's* family by the people wishing them happiness and prosperity. The chief priest took his seat in front of the verhandah in a line along with his ten assistants who were on either side in a group of
five facing the north. The Chief priest worshipped U Blei Shillong and Ka [769]
Blei-Long Siem and the responsibility of invoking each ancestor or ancestress
was devolved on each assistant priest : [793]

Asstt. Priest	Chief Priest	Asstt. Priest
1. U Dienger. 2. U Marshan. 3. U Ram Shillong. 4. Ka Phan Siem Shillong. 5. U Biskorom.	6. U Shillong. 7. Ka Blei Long Siem.	8. U Phan Kynthei. 9. U Shynrang. 10. Ka Lei Duwan. 11. Ka Siem Sngi. 12. Ka Blei Synchar.

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* (1) U Blei Shillong (2) U Suidnia (3) U Kpa & U Kha
(4) U Bhakraw Basaw (5) U Bakri Shako

After Lingodh H.—The Pomblang Nongkrem (in Khasi) 1946. Khasi & Jaintia Hills Press, Shillong.

796 The goats were sacrificed by his sister's eldest son (*Siem-khynnah*) and in
782 charge of respective units at the open courtyard. The priests evoked the
ancestors and ancestress and called upon them by name praying 'Oh God and
769 Goddess, I offer this sacrifice as our ancestors did. Bless the *Siem*, his family
and the people of his state. I shall beseech you again on this day after one
231 year. You create favourable weather by virtue of your power, bring clouds
and rains to yield bumper crops and ensure a happy and prosperous life.'

On the last day (Nongkrem), a man of Mawroh clan sacrificed a pig introducing an iron spike in its left armpit. Nine pieces of meat from different parts of the pig's body were again offered to their five ancestors. The *Siem* in the presence of his *Darbar* performed the last item of festival by praying to U Shillong, when the Chief of Rynjah clan also followed in the same way for seeking the blessings of their Chief deity.

This brought the ritual to an end performed at the residence of *Siem*. The five pieces of goat's and pig's meat offered to their five ancestors, were then handed over to the in-charge of the five units considered as somewhat higher in their State organisation. They distributed them at a suitable place in their unit, making a feast as a sort of public declaration of the completion of their greatest festival for the year.

DANCING

535 Besides the ritual described above, dance with the accompaniment of music
formed an important aspect of this festival. A dance known as *sad-tyngkoh*
796 had been a regular feature for the first, second, third and fifth day. This dance
[533] has some interesting features. It has to be performed in pairs. The first
pair was constituted by Chief priest and the Chief musician. Second to fifth
pairs were between the Sirdars of the eight units after which *Siem* along with an
official of his council constituted the sixth pair. The subsequent pairs were
formed by any two persons from the gathering. They danced only after bowing
first before the Oak pillar (Rishot), then to *Siem* on the fifth day. This pairing
was then not adhered to on completion of the last rite of the festival.

A second type of dance (*Ka sad mastieh*) was then performed in the court-
yard by the musicians as well as by the professional dancers (nong-shad) with
sword and fly-brush in the afternoon of the third day. The dance was always
[291] held in pairs first by musicians, and then dancers, who donned their traditional
dress consisting of silk turban (Jainspong) decorated with feathers, coloured
[301] sleeveless coat (Jymphong) silver chains and coral necklaces. Later on they
joined the procession, that went to the adjacent hill where after the completion
of the ceremony of goat killing, a group dance was performed returning to the
residence of *Siem* ultimately.

This dance (*sad-nohkjat*) was performed by the Siems family. It was held
early in the morning of the fourth day in the central hall (Shlur) and also
[291] in the courtyard. The men put on their normal dress whereas the women
dressed themselves with gold and silver crown (pansngiat), numerous silver
[301] ornaments and different coloured blouse. They dressed and braided the
hairs into a knot just at the nape. The High Priestess who also danced with
the membes of the Siems' family, stood in the middle of the line and chief
[302] musician stood at one end. They hold each other in hand and danced round
the fire-place of the central hall (Shlur) in anti-clock-wise direction in accompaniment of music. The people assembled there, gave vent to their feeling in their customary way every time, before they resumed to make it three times. Similar performance of dances were also held in the courtyard.

Then followed the dance of the girls (*Ki shad kynthei*) who were also wearing 535
dress as described above. They kept their eyes down, keeping their arms on
their sides taking such a short steps with the music, that the movement of the
feet were hardly perceptable. The boys were also in their dancing dress as [534]
worn by *nongshad* and danced with fly-brush round the girls making their
steps with the beatings of the drums. The music started from the morning
would be stopped only after completion of the dance which prolonged till
evening. These functions served as a good source of amusement to the people,
enabling them to have a good diversion from their monotonous life with an
opportunity to meet their friends and relations who assembled there from
different parts of the hill.

DISCUSSION

From the fore-going description, it is evident that the Khasi live in a 182
democratic set up in which the secular duties are entrusted to the *Siem*. A 64
different rule is followed in the case of religious festivals. Every Khasi family
entrusts the sacredotal work of the house to the youngest daughter. The 796
Siem's sister (Siem Sad) being the nearest member of his mother's clan, is [593]
made responsible for the observance of those ceremonies which concerns the
welfare of the subjects. The people attend the festival to seek blessings of
their supreme deity U Shillong and their presence in the *Siem's* residence indicates
their loyalty to him. The rituals of the festival, instead of being performed
by her (High Priestess), were conducted by the Chief Priest (Soh blei) for
which he was allotted a very imporatnt position in the celebration. The
musicians were given similar status owing to the belief in the sacredness of
their music. It ought to be played in proper tunes otherwise the displeasure
of the deity would fall on them on finding any slight departure in this respect.
For this reason, the music is considered as important as the rituals and the role
of musicians were consequently given due recognition at every stage of the
festival. The tradition of deputing one person of Nengnong clan to sacrifice
the goat at the top of the hill was followed on account of their [782]
ancestors having carried out in olden times the profession of aide-de-camp
(body guard) to the *Siem*. Another person of kharbamen clan was also
asked to carry the head of the sacrificial animal from the hill to the residence
of the *Siem* after the worship, as his predecessors were serfs in ancient
times during the period of their captivity in this State. Such incidents were
found expressed in a symbolic way through their ceremonies.

The most important concern of the people was to maintain their mode 796
of living together with their property and other means of subsistence. They
worshipped him so that he might prevent the evil spirits from doing any 769
harm and may in addition grant them bumper crops. To be recipient of
such a favour, they appeased their god U Shillong with gifts and sacrifices. 782
It is not sure whether he is considered as one of their deified ancestors but 776
his important position in the Khasi pantheon enabled him to have some
priority in their worship. The offering of red-cock together with a yellow 182
goat, moreover, revealed his amiable and benevolent nature as the malignant
ones get representation invariably with black colours. U Shillong was
invoked simultaneously with other dead ancestors, with this hope, that all
the deities would pool their supernatural strength in fighting the evil spirits
before the latter were able to cause any harm to their crops or to reduce in
any way the fertility of their fields.

It would be interesting to refer here about the presentation of nine pieces of meat from various parts of the sacrificial animal. It may be a case of appeasement by serving him with some food but there seems to be something

796 magical in such gifts. The khasi deities being souls of departed members,
are anthropomorphic in nature, have all the qualities of an ordinary human
782 being. The worshippers believe that the deities may also loose their strength
769 in course of time which can be augmented only by offering suitable sacrifices.
They presented pieces of meat to transfer in them the supernatural
776 'power' which are concentrated or lodged in those regions of the sacrificial
182 animal, from where they were taken out. It is a case of reciprocal help between the deity and the devotee so that on attaining their normal strength, they would fulfil their request.

796 The Khasi people while participating in the celebration gave vent to their
emotion through their traditional cries. It could not be definitely established
769 whether these were any indication of frightening the evil spirits but on the other
hand, those were intended to cheer the *Siem*, musicians, and the respective
182 units taking parts in the celebration. The musicians on another
occassion, went round the altar three times on reaching the top of the hill. The
[644 members of the *Siem's* house similarly performed a sacred dance round the
fire place of central hall (Shlur) to the same number of times. This odd number
[801 of three seemed to be an auspicious one. The exact cause for such a reverential attitude to this figure may be to pay respect to their primal ancestress (Ka Iawbei), her husband (U Thawlang) and her brother, *i.e.*, first maternal uncle (U Suidnia) who are considered highest amongst all the Khasi deities.

796 The dancing is generally taken as secular part of religious function, but the
Khasi people considered them (except the last one) as sacred for the reason
535 that it is one of their methods of propitiating their deity. The people at times,
ascribe certain meanings to them to rationalise their thinking. The dancing
182 invariably put the participants into ecstasy to enable them to be in communion with their supernatural beings, yet those are interpreted as a device to control the spirits inspite of its calm and quiet nature. The people even then enjoyed them with this hope that these would prevent the intruding spirits from spreading diseases. Owing to the fixation of the dates of the function at the time of sowing period, the dance of the unmarried girls may have some bearing on the promotion of fertility of the soil. The custom of allowing Khasi boys to dance round the spinsters with fly-flap in one of their hands may be to protect them from the influence of the evil spirits.

The heads of the various units adhered to the official precedence strictly before they allowed a common man to take part in the dancing. The custom of allowing two officials to dance, at a time, was in recognition to their equal status. It had become a practice to follow at every stage of their function. The presence of all the in-charge of this Siemship were essential to secure the blessings of their deity on behalf of his subjects whom they represent in official capacity in this festival. This is a suitable mechanism to foster unity and solidarity among the people of the different units which is the main aim of this celebration. This was found to be so when Khasi people from all parts of State were seem witnessing the dancing of the unmarried girls. The informant on being asked to state the reason of permitting the spinsters only in this dance, came out with an interesting fact about the ancient Khasi tradition. The dance used to offer at one time, an opportunity to the youngmen of the Royal families in selecting their brides. A betel leaf with a nut were usually thrown at a girl and the men going round them, remained as witness of this incident. This explanation received some support from the frequent utterances (*rong-rong*) by the public, expressing a desire to run away with a girl dancing with graceful style.

796 The celebration can be taken up as a solidarity rite. The performance is
all the more essential for the purpose of security without which the people
182

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

243 the District, nor do any superior kinds of cereals appear to have been substituted for inferior ones.

THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF RICE CULTIVATION, in English and Khásí, are as follow:—The blade as it first shows, *spch-u-kyba*; the blade when well above the ground, *la-thylleng-u-kyba*; the ears when first formed, *lam-mat*; the ears beginning to ripen, *byr-tem*; the ripe ears, *la-hih*; unhusked rice, *u-kyba*; husked rice, *u-khaw*; cooked rice, *ka-ja*.

262 THE VARIOUS SOLID AND LIQUID PREPARATIONS made from rice
[435] are the following:—(1) *U-kypu*, cakes of different kinds, sold at six
• [782] or twelve for a penny, according to size. (2) *U-shird or gâk-khir*,
prepared by the hillmen as an offering to their deity at the conclusion
273 of the harvest. (3) *Kadam*, fermented rice water, sold at the rate
435 of from three-farthings to threepence per quart, according to the
strength of the liquor. (4) *Ka kiad-phatika or ka kiad-hirak*, a kind
of spirits distilled from rice, and sold at from threepence to fourpence-halfpenny per quart.

243 OTHER CEREALS.—Indian corn, or *u-riu-ka-dem*, is grown on homestead lands. The ground is first manured, and the seed is sown about the middle of April. The crop is fit for cutting in September and October. A kind of millet seed called *u-krdi* is commonly sown with paddy on high lands. For want of more suitable land, however, this crop is often cultivated by itself on rocky slopes; and when this course is adopted, the jungle is first cut down in February and burnt. The seed is sown in April, and the crop gathered in December.

244 PULSES AND FIBRES.—Only two kinds of pulses are grown in the
Hills, *u-rym-bai-ktung* and *u-rym-bai-ji*, both of which are varieties
283 of beans. They are sown on high lands in March and April, and
gathered in December. The only fibre is that made from the pineapple stalk, which is largely used for making netted bags.

245 MISCELLANEOUS CROPS.—(1) Oranges.—There are numerous
[439] orange plantations in the neighbourhood of Cherrá Púnjí, and the
fruit is exported to all parts of Bengal. In the year 1876-77 the estimated exports were 9,400,000 in number, valued at Rs. 37,600, or £3760, at the rate of Rs. 12 or £1, 4s. per three thousand. These figures show a decrease in number as compared with the estimated export twenty years ago. The trees flower in March or April, and the fruit ripens in October and the following months. In some cases the oranges are allowed to remain on the trees till March, but